

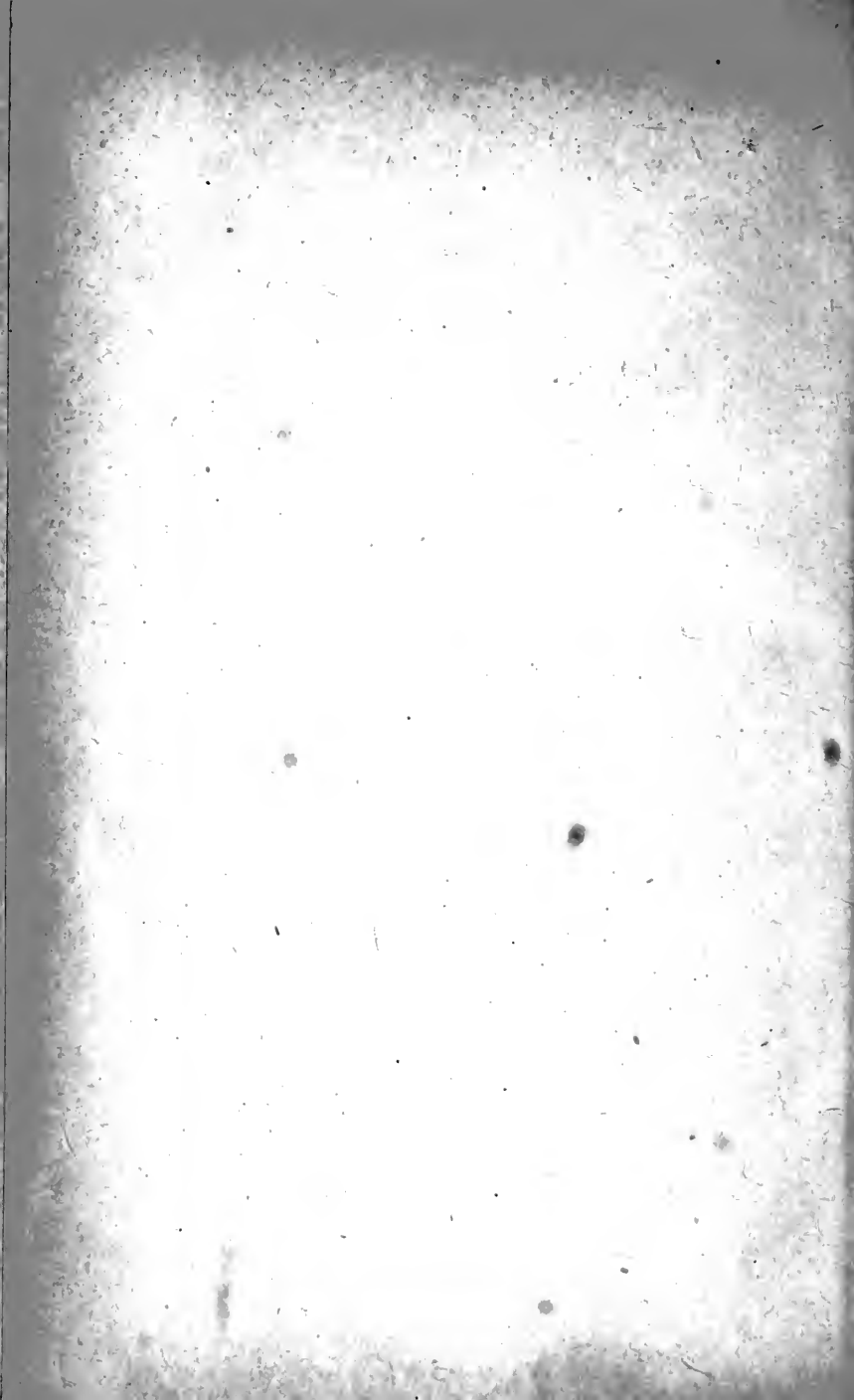


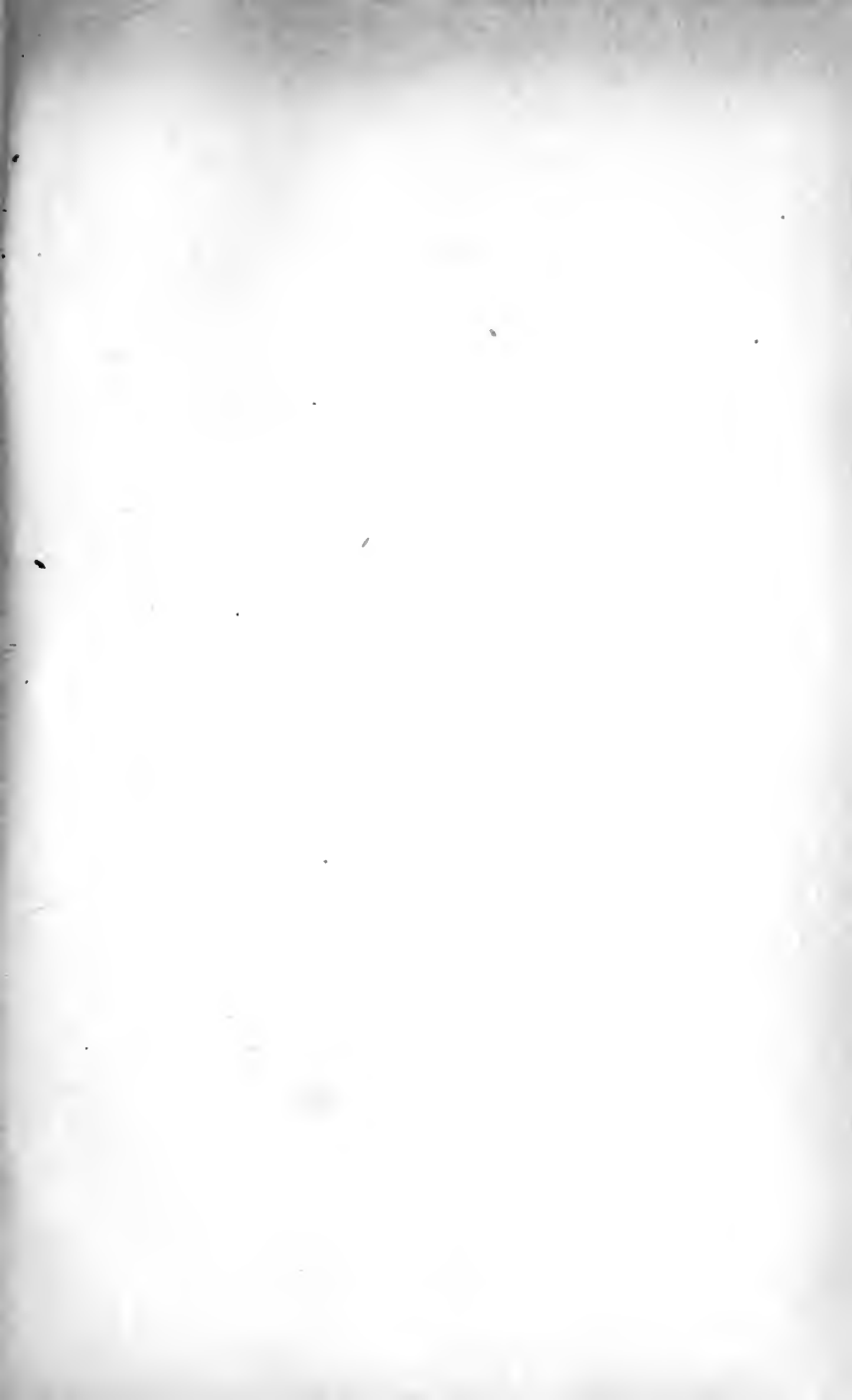
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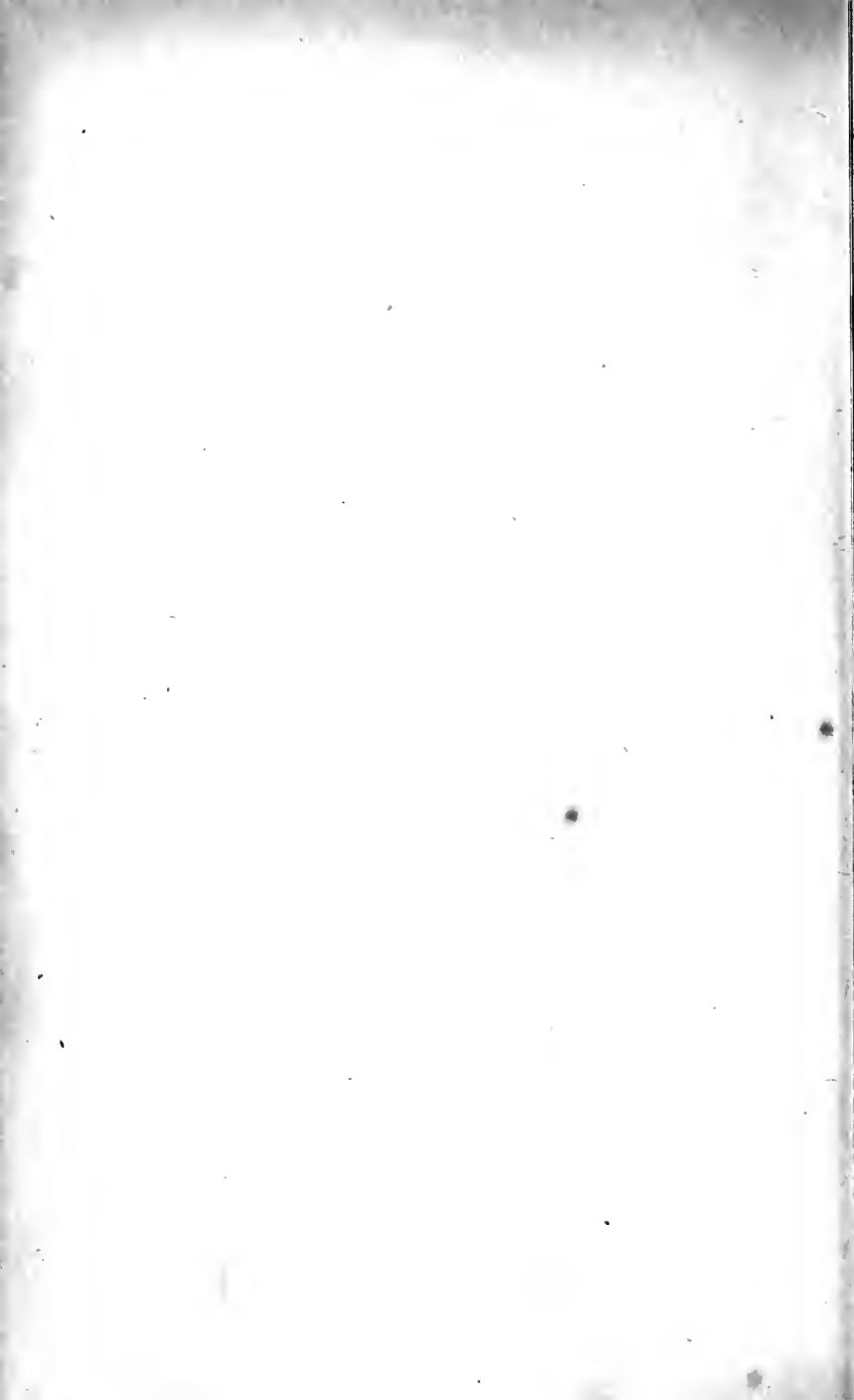
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THE
BOOK OF BEAUTY.

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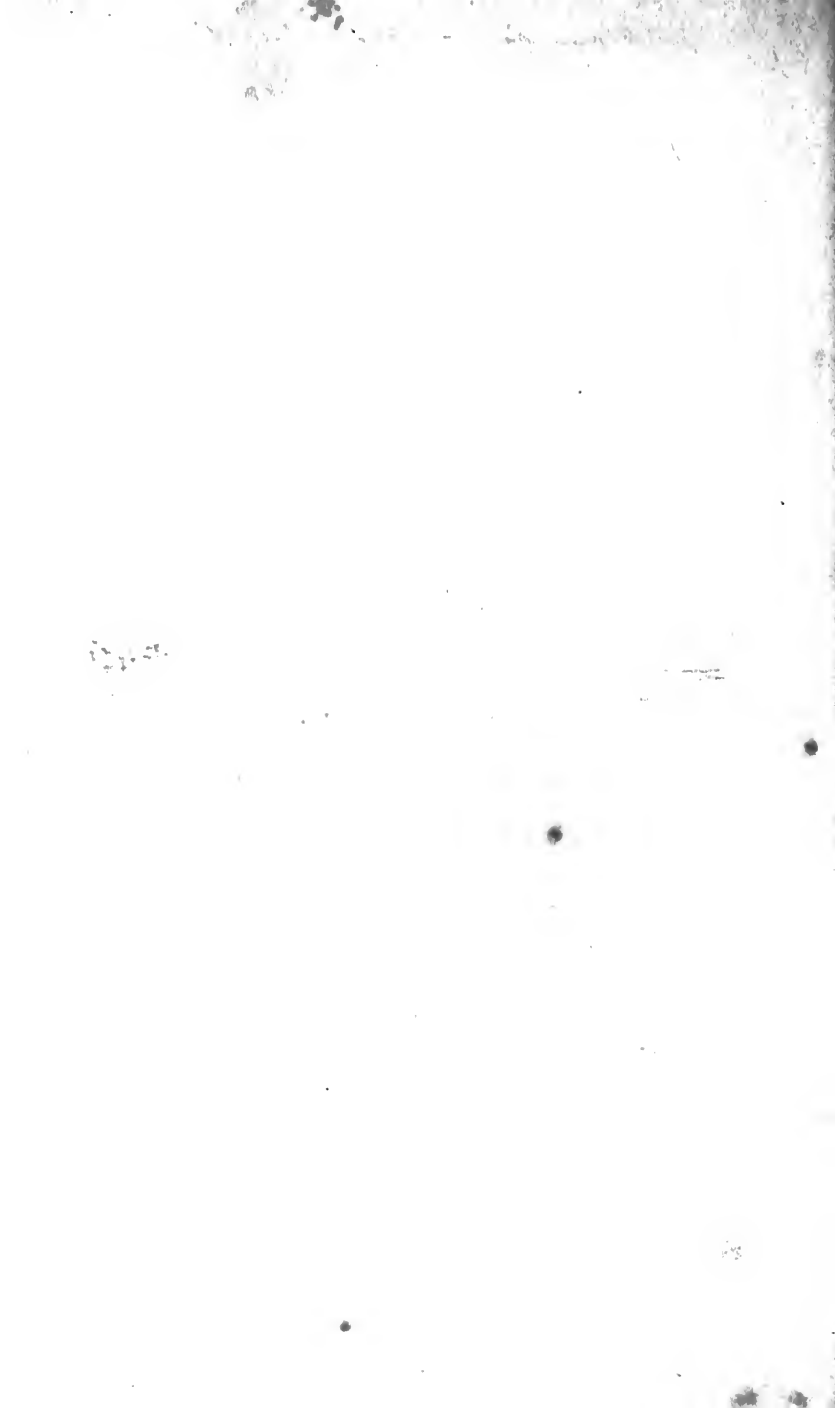




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BOOK OF SEASONS
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HEATH'S
BOOK OF BEAUTY.

1835.

WITH
NINETEEN BEAUTIFULLY FINISHED ENGRAVINGS,
FROM
DRAWINGS BY THE FIRST ARTISTS.
EDITED BY
THE COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON.

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LONGMAN, REES, ORME, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMAN,
PATERNOSTER ROW;
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THE
BOOK OF BEAUTY.

THE COUNTESS OF WILTON.

BY THE EDITOR.

DEEP thought has left its own mild pensive trace,
Shedding a charm, sweet lady, on thy face —
Such as the moon oft leaves upon the stream,
Which loves to mirror its effulgent beam :
Yes, Purity has here affixed her seal,
Whose clear impression thy bright eyes reveal.
That brow, beyond patrician fairness fair—
That form, all grace—that angel-human air,
Tell that the halcyon Peace broods calm within,
The dove untouched by care, unsoiled by sin !
Fair temple, fit for love, the purest birth
That ever wandered from the sky to earth !
How from thy face do youth and fancy gleam,
Like planets beautiful beheld in dream,
Blushing and beaming amidst smiles divine,
As lights through alabaster vases shine !

Yet, what were beauty, if the glorious mind
Forsook the temple where it dwelt enshrined?
'Twere poor and valueless—cold, common clay,
O'er which the spirit sheds no kindling ray—
A ruined altar, of its god bereft,
With nought to love, and nought to worship left!
Thy beauty, lady, the rare charm has caught
Of woman's softness blended with high thought:
Reason o'er fancy holding mild control,
Thy face displays the mirror of thy soul.
Long may our England—*island of the free,*
The brave, and noble—women boast like *thee!*
Whose lives are (like their beauty) without spot,
Admired, beloved, and mourned, and —unforgot.





ANTONIA.

BY THE VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH.

“ MAURICE, dearest Maurice !” said Clara——

“ Clara, dearest Clara !” replied her brother, mocking the tone of her voice.

“ Now don’t laugh at me,” said the half-angry girl; “ I won’t bear it. I’ll leave you to nurse yourself; and you shall feel what it is to lose me. If you will not let me have my own way, I shall hand you over to the tender assiduities of Old Dinah, and your own particular long John.”

“ Clara, I never yielded to threats; and though Dinah and long John are less pretty than some people, they still have merits which some people do not as yet possess.”

“ What can you mean ?” said Clara, colouring.

“ Be patient, and I’ll tell you.”

“ Indeed, I shall not; for I never am patient when told to be so; and I don’t the least like you to-day. You have been as gruff as a *vieille moustache* the whole morning, poring over your writing-box, and frowning whenever I approached you as

if you hated me ; and yet, my sweet and sage brother, I shrewdly suspect that your studies are not of a very severe or philosophical nature. Shew me *that* picture."

A slight blush passed over the languid and very handsome countenance Clara was silently gazing at ; she clapped her hands with joy at her imagined triumph, and was on the point of seizing the object of her curiosity, when she saw tears in her brother's eyes, and that pale face, which she loved better than any other in the world, assume an expression of deep melancholy. In an instant she was at his feet.

"Forgive me, my own best brother ; forgive your foolish Clara ! You know I would not for worlds give you an instant's pain ; and that I would buy your peace of mind with my own life, if it were necessary. I was only laughing ; and if my recklessness has caused you a moment of sorrow, I will never laugh again."

It was now her turn to weep ; and as Maurice tried to raise her, he saw her blue eyes swimming in tears. Well might he cherish and be proud of his little Clara ; for a more faithful and devoted heart never beat in woman's breast. He attempted to kiss her forehead, but the effort was too much for him. Turning deadly pale, he fell back on the couch. Poor Clara, screaming with terror, rushed to the bell ; upon which the aforesaid Dinah and long John—the one an old family nurse, the other

Maurice's servant, whom he had taken from his regiment, and who in all his campaigns had been with him—made their *entrée*, and proved the efficiency of their services, by restoring, after some time, the shattered nerves of the invalid.

Maurice, at the time I speak of, earl of Courland, had earned a brilliant reputation and some severe wounds in following, over many a hard-fought field, the victorious flag of his country. When he was scarcely seventeen, his father died, leaving him a younger brother's fortune and a classical education to go through the world with. At least so thought the old lord. Edward, Maurice's elder brother, was sickly and studious. Well informed upon most subjects, and with talents of a very high order, he cultivated the fertile fields of literature and science with energies which seemed scarcely meet tenants for the feeble and puny form which contained them. Amiable in every relation of life, his heart knew not even a shade of jealousy at the physical superiority of his younger brother. Edward never presumed upon his own acquired powers, his profound learning, or his almost universal information; but he loved and admired Maurice with all his heart and soul; and though sometimes sighing over his levity, or deploring his want of fixed purpose, he was proud of his high and manly bearing, his courage, which from boyhood had been as chivalrous as it was proverbial, but, above all, of his feeling and affectionate heart.

Such were the brothers. Clara, the only sister, was adored and spoiled by both.

About six years before the foregoing discussion between Maurice and Clara, Lord Courland, the father of the trio, was gathered to his ancestors. At this time Maurice was staying in Derbyshire, at the house of Mr. Arden, under whose guidance he was pursuing his studies. Mr. Arden was a friend of Lord Courland's, whom he had met somewhere abroad; an intimacy had grown up between them, which was uninterrupted, and Lord Courland proved the high opinion he entertained of his talents and integrity, by confiding Maurice to his care. When the news of Lord Courland's death was made known, Maurice received it with feelings of the deepest and most sincere regret. But he was totally unprepared for that of his brother, which followed quickly after, and which was to make so complete a change in his situation. The blow descended upon him, and affected and upset him in more ways than one. Disorganising every plan, unsettling and unhinging his mind, plunging him into uncertainty and sorrow, calling him away from his present pursuits to others which he knew not of,—the calamity served but to open a dreary prospect before him. Yet there were more reasons than these for his despondency; for such, after the first feelings of hurried agitation had passed away, was the prevailing sensation of his mind. But he must tell his own tale.

Two or three days after the conversation above recorded, Maurice and Clara were sitting in her brother's library. He was leaning back in a state of dreamy reflection. Clara was what she called practising, which was playing over, with equal brilliancy of fancy and execution, every variation of every air which came into her head. At last Maurice interrupted her by calling her to him.

" You lately asked me, Clara, to shew you a picture, over which you have seen me ponder for many a weary and wretched hour. Yet that picture is, besides yourself, my only solace and comfort. I would long since have shewn it to you, but it entails a history of my early life, perhaps of youthful folly, which convicts your sage brother of no claim to the honourable appellation you give him. Look at it ; it is my idol, and my excuse. That form is dearer to me even than yours. Clara ! you have yet never loved. When you do, may your love be happier than mine !

" I am sure you remember the time when I first was banished to the seclusion of a private tutor's, if such he might have been called. I had not long been emancipated from school. I had hoped to have been allowed to remain for a short time with poor Edward and you in our happy home ; it was in vain, however, to contend against our father's wish, and, with ill-concealed sorrow, I got into the carriage which was to convey me into Derbyshire. It was almost dark when I arrived at my future

abode. A tall and very striking individual received me at the door of what seemed to be a well-appointed and comfortable house. It soon became evident to me that my tutor was no common person. Few things give greater insight into character than the *entourage* of those whose pursuits or turn of mind we seek to divine. Gradually I saw round me, when I had time to look about, that refinement in almost every detail which betrayed not only innate good taste, but acquired and classic judgment. Pictures by the old masters, casts from the antique, marbles, prints, and, above all, a library that any one might have been proud of, were the first objects which met my eye. Mr. Arden, the presiding genius of the place, was evidently no pedantic bookworm, no narrow-minded and prejudicial bigot. The light of genius, unquenched by maturer age, was beaming in his glance; and though I could not help fancying that melancholy had cast a shade over his features, and betrayed itself in the deep lines which furrowed his forehead, it was scarcely perceptible from the cordiality with which he seemed to greet me. I could not take my eyes from him,—perhaps he saw this; but his manner never altered, nor did he seem to remark the intentness with which I gazed upon him. I dwell upon this because he has been mixed up in the history of this part of my life; and his name must be an object of deep interest to me as long as that life lasts.

“ A few days, and I was as peacefully settled in

the quiet scene of Hazeldale as if I had been in a dearer home. Mr. Arden in every way confirmed my first impressions. We passed most of the day together. He was more like a friend than a tutor to me; and though eagerly encouraging and directing my studies, he was as willing to join in the recreation of my leisure hours.

“We wandered together over that lovely country; we have sat under the ruined walls of Haddon, and have talked over the worthies of the olden time, and the glorious wonders of the Peak. Sometimes we sought the solitudes of Dovedale, or climbed the bolder and more rugged hills, which by their dreary wildness add a peculiar charm to these regions, and tempt the sportsman to pursue his quarry over many a mile of heathery waste. Mr. Arden was a practised fisherman, and in the almost crystal waters of that country, where the unskilful had better fling his rod into the stream and resign a hopeless enterprise, I learned the secrets of that gentle art; and many a happy hour has left me on the banks of the beautiful Dove, or by the Lathkill’s green meadows and transparent stream.

“But the calm of these halcyon days was not to last. My rambles were not always enlivened by Mr. Arden’s companionship, and my spirit of inquiry was little content to be bounded even by the fairy landscapes I had as yet explored. One day, I had been fishing in a small rivulet that forced its way through tangled thickets of alder and bram-

ble, which the honeysuckle and the wild rose were gifting with freshest fragrance and liveliest colours; the air was filled with the rich odour of the hawthorn blossoms and the plants which covered the margin of the stream with a luxuriant vegetation of every hue. I wandered on by the side of the brook, until I came to a small foot-bridge. This passed, I found myself close to a paling, whose antiquity was evident from its decay, and whose existence seemed to depend upon the ivy which bound it together. My curiosity was excited by the solitary appearance of the place. I could see no sign of a dwelling, so embowered in foliage was the fence and what it surrounded. Laying down my rod, I sprang over the paling, and, urged by some secret influence I did not wait to account for, proceeded to explore what was before me. Once through the screen, I saw an old-fashioned manor-house, with its formal gables and antique chimneys rising among three or four giant trees, with which it appeared co-eval. These had apparently been spared from the destroying axe, which had made sad havoc round about them; for all else was a garden. They had no companions in their loneliness, and the gaudier colours of the gay parterre contrasted beautifully with their more sombre tints. The flower-beds bore every mark of careful cultivation. A woman's taste was evident in all; for there are tokens, however light, which betray the impress of the gentler sex, so widely do they differ

from man's more harsh and ruder fancy. I soon began to be afraid of discovery; I had no business there, and my intrusion was unwarrantable. Reason overcame curiosity, and I retreated. Again at the wooden bridge, I looked every where for the smoke of some village, and listened for the busy hum of mankind. There was not a sound except the ripple of the brook.

"Close by the paling, and almost imperceptibly, ran a narrow path. I followed this for more than a mile: it led me at last to a cottage, where, under pretence of refreshing myself, I contrived to satisfy my curiosity and gain the information I desired. The manor-house, it appeared, was tenanted by two ladies; the one a young and beautiful girl; the other, who was rarely seen, was older, and suffering from either sickness or more confirmed ill health. They were supposed to be mother and daughter, but no one knew this with certainty; the house was let to them, and for three or four years they had been its inmates. They had lived in entire seclusion: no one visited them except Mr. Arden of Hazeldale.

"Judge of my astonishment when I heard this. It accounted for occasional absences, and various rides alone. A mystery, however, was evidently cast round the inmates of the manor-house, and, I know not why, I determined at any risk to solve it.

"The next Sunday, pretending I should ride over to a church some distance from home, I turned my

horse's head towards the cottage where I obtained my intelligence. I had found out that the younger lady was constant in her attendance at a church in the neighbourhood; and, except there, she was rarely seen. I need not tell you that I returned there, and from that hour my fate was sealed. For many succeeding Sundays I attended regularly. Every time I gazed upon the features of the beautiful unknown I became more and more unable to resist the influence of her loveliness. Sometimes I fancied that her eyes detected the fixed gaze of mine; I longed and yet feared to meet and speak to her. I used to wander round the paling, hoping to catch a glimpse of her form, or hear her voice. As yet I had not felt the thrilling power of its music. Accident at last accomplished our acquaintance. One day she had forsaken the protection of the fence, and was wandering on the margin of the stream; it was thus I first met her. I did not dare to speak to her; but as she passed near me an eloquent blush mantled on her cheek and made her head droop as if she would have concealed it, which told that she recognised me. I dared to believe this, and I was almost maddened with the thoughts my own credulity inspired. I met her again, but this time she turned back when she perceived me. At once I was beside myself; every consideration of propriety was forgotten. I pursued her; she quickened her pace, but without avail, and I overtook her, and gazed on her, and

she on me; and yet I remember no word of greeting or recognition, of apology or explanation, passed between us. I know not if the young heart's first dream of passion be a crime, but to those unskilled in the world's hypocrisy, and on whom the chilly fetters of society have not been thrown, a moment such as that, when love for the first time asserts and vindicates his supremacy over every other feeling, and subdues them to himself, is the brightest and happiest in life's dreary page.

"At last we spoke—I cannot recount all that passed between us. I have but a dreamy recollection of those hours, when the full tide of all earthly happiness, as I then thought, was bearing me along with it. I told her of my love, from the hour when I first beheld her; of the passionate longing with which I had sought the chance that had brought me near her. Silently she listened, and yet her eyes, as they were fixed on mine, told even more in answer than I dared to hope.

"We met again and again. She told me what she knew of her history. Her mother, with whom she had passed the last four years in total seclusion, had brought her to England from the sunny shores of Italy, which she loved as her birth-place and early home. They left Naples suddenly, and without warning or preparation. Of her father she said nothing, except that he was an Englishman. There seemed to be a mystery in her manner, and a hesitation when speaking upon this subject, which,

though I remarked, I did not venture to question; and I was too much hurried away by passionate feelings to listen to the dictates of curiosity. What was it to me who she was, what she was? I knew she loved me—this was my universe of happiness, and I cared not to seek for its boundary or inquire its extent.

“How beautiful was Antonia! and yet how ignorant of the power of the charms she possessed! A mere child of nature, she was utterly unpractised in the world’s ways. At times, indeed, she fancied our meetings were a sin, unsanctioned as they were by her mother, and contrived only by stealth and in secrecy. Many an hour did I pass in persuading her, as love is easily persuaded, to meet me again; and when I succeeded, she half reproached me, and prophesied mournfully that our happiness was not destined to last—and she was right.

“Spring and summer had passed away and brought no change with them. Antonia, in perfect innocence and gradual security, gave herself up to the feelings she could no longer control. We seldom thought of discovery, and our rashness was probably the cause of our ruin. How we were betrayed I never knew. One day, one fatal, wretched day, at the appointed hour, and at the place where we used to meet, she was no where to be seen—and that hour, and another, and another passed, and still she never came. Maddened by my fears, I knew not what course to adopt. If I had gone near the house I

risked a step which might have been dangerous to both of us ; and yet I scarce dared to leave the place without some tidings of her I loved. Evening came, and still no sound of approaching footsteps, no glimpse of the form of my beloved. Sick and reckless as to what I did, I turned down the valley towards Hazeldale. My progress homeward was indeed slow and uncertain ; for the sun was driving away the night vapours, and a curtain of mist was rising from the river and the deep dingles of the valley before I reached home. As I entered the house, early as it was, the first person I saw was Arden. He never uttered a syllable ; but, with a solemn and haughty manner, put two letters into my hand. The broad black edge and black seal of one made me shudder,—it was Edward's writing. I looked up, Arden was gone ; the other letter was from him, and he had left me the full enjoyment of both. Almost desperately I summoned up courage to ascertain the worst, and tore open the seals. Our poor father's death was announced to me by Edward, and with this melancholy news his wish that I should repair home immediately, to assist in paying the last tribute of love and duty to our parent. Arden's letter—I remember every word—was couched thus :—‘ You have attempted to undermine the innocence of *my child* ; you have wished to rob a parent of his dearest treasure. Deceitful hypocrite as you are, you have no sense of shame, or it would be needless for me to say, let me never

see your face again. Do not pollute my house with your presence—begone at once and for ever! Thank your God, if you dare, that your villany has been frustrated; and, as you value your valueless life, do not seek again to meet her whose fair fame has been scarcely saved, whose peace of mind has been destroyed.’

“Picture to yourself, dearest, if you can, my situation. On the one hand, the powerful calls of duty and affection urging me to hasten to our orphan home; on the other, all the most violent feelings to which human nature owns itself subject making themselves heard with no still, small voices, and pleading for her I loved, whose spotless character I was bound to protect from every accusation, and whose virtues, even if we never met again, it was imperative on me to bear witness to and vindicate. Then, again, I longed to penetrate the veil which hung over Arden’s knowledge of our intercourse—to justify myself to him, and treat his unjust aspersions with the scorn I knew they deserved. I rushed to his room to seek him: he was no where to be found. I suspected at once that he had returned to the manor-house—not only from his continued absence from home, but from his threat of vengeance if I attempted to seek Antonia. But I cared not a rush for my life without her; and no power on earth would have induced me to forego the chance of once more confessing to her that she alone, and for ever, was mistress of my destiny.

“It was nearly dusk when I reached the foot-bridge. Daylight would have increased my difficulties had I at once ventured to approach the manor-house. The screen once passed, I rushed across the greensward; and, hidden by the deep shadow of one of the large trees, I watched the glimmer of the lights in that part of the building where I knew Antonia’s room was. There was not a breath of air, and no sound broke the stillness of the place. Time passed, and yet no one appeared to be moving near the lights. At last, and suddenly, they disappeared. I felt sick at heart, and my spirit sank within me. I knew not what course to adopt; I felt that any effort I made must be instant or unavailing, for the next day had claims on me which I dared not resist. Gliding gently from my hiding-place, I approached the house and placed myself under the window where I had seen the lights: the delay and the uncertainty of my situation overcame every other thought; and, subduing my voice as I best could, I called upon my beloved. In a moment the light re-appeared; slowly and cautiously the lattice opened, and once more I beheld her. All was silent and still, not a leaf stirred; the very lights in her chamber burned straight and steadily. There was something awful and solemn in that moment. I could not speak to her, for my tongue refused its office. A letter fell at my feet; and when I stooped to reach it, I had seen Antonia for the last time, for the lattice was

closed, and the light was gone. I had no time to think, else I could not have stifled or suppressed the bitter feelings of that hour. My heart was bursting with agony: happily for human nature, these tempests of mingled passions cannot last, or the strain of their combined power would at once relieve the victim from endurance and existence.

“I have never beheld her since. To Arden’s house I never returned. I reached our home, as you may perhaps remember, in a state of mind and body that could not resist the attack of violent illness, which for a while rendered me helpless. No one knew the real cause of my sufferings. Alas! all that remained to me of Antonia was the memory of the past, and that letter, which never yet, in sickness or in active exertion, on the field of battle or in the quiet of home, has left the spot nearest my heart which has long been consecrated to it.

“Every thing which was mine was sent from Hazeldale. I had no excuse to return *there*, even had it been my wish. I could only have forced an explanation from Arden, who appeared in every way predisposed against me. Antonia’s letter, too, forbade any attempt of this kind. Yet my spirit, subdued and broken as it was, rebelled against the thought of leaving England without some more certain tidings of my beloved. I was in hourly expectation of the order to join my regiment. You remember how poor Edward combated my warlike

resolutions, and how vain were all his objections. My commission had been obtained, and my determination once taken was unchangable.

“Before I left England, secretly and in disguise I determined to visit the neighbourhood of the manor-house. A restless feeling of anxiety prompted and urged me on. I cannot describe what I felt, or the longing and intense interest with which every mile of that journey was travelled over. I was still very feeble, but the effort was of use to me ; and when at last I found myself among those well-known scenes, it was a proof of my returning strength that I did not sink under the agony of that hour.

“Judge of my consternation when I heard that the house was deserted ! No one knew whither its inmates were gone. Mr. Arden also had left Hazeldale. No clue or trace remained. The servants, too, were changed ; and care had evidently been taken to conceal the destination of all those whose fate was so deeply interesting to me. All I could ascertain was, that the period of their departures was the same. I returned home, careless of what became of me, and almost broken-hearted. I resolved to cast away every thought of what had been, and to devote myself solely to my profession. Vain hope, miserable delusion ! Months of active and incessant occupation have not quenched the passion of those happier times ; though I have sought to die, fate, which has not spared others, has been too generous to me. When I heard of

Edward's death, and the changes consequent upon it, keenly and bitterly did I feel this. I have seen my friends and companions falling around me, while in vain I have invoked and courted a doom like theirs. I have won honours which are useless to me; I have inherited rank which is valueless; no object, no aim, scarcely a hope, is mine. You, dearest, are the last and only tie which attaches me to the world, and you will sympathise with and pity me."

Antonia's letter to Maurice was as follows:—

"The blow has fallen, dearest, which my fears have long predicted, and our happiness, which you vainly attempted to persuade yourself was to be as immutable as our love, has been at once destroyed. I need not tell you all I have suffered. The suddenness of the stroke, as well as its severity, have alike overwhelmed me. My father has poured upon me the whole of his indignation. I have submitted in humble resignation to his will. How different from all I had imagined, and all I had fondly taught myself to believe!

"Alas, dearest! against you his angry denunciations are principally directed. He believes you false and unworthy, and imputes to you the odious wish to deceive and betray me. Vain, however, have been and will ever be his attempts to shake my implicit reliance on thee, my best-beloved. In the depths of suffering, my comfort and my pride has been to retrace thee, in all thy manly honour

and noble bearing, through the secret recesses of my heart. I have remembered thy tenderness, and my own confiding reliance on it, when first I ventured to listen to thy vows of affection; and I have never wavered in my faith to thee; I have not for one short moment doubted of thy love or thy truth; I cannot ever distrust thee, happen what will; I am thine, wholly thine, and no earthly power can sever the tie which binds me for ever to thee but thine own faithlessness or my death.

“ Think on these words, love, and let no impatience or hasty and rash passion tempt your urging my father to explain his present decision. No arguments you could use, no prayers of mine, will induce him to alter his decree. I write this in perfect uncertainty as to when or how you may receive it, in total ignorance of our fate, in deep anxiety as to your resolves. My poor mother has been severely reproached: she is, alas! fast failing. God knows what my fate may be, but my duty is clear. Be patient, dearest Maurice; if I can submit and endure, surely you can imitate the resolution of a weak woman; and remember that it is for my sake—for our sake, that you will do it. I am, perhaps, too sanguine; but I feel a conviction within me that the day will come when my father’s eyes will be opened.

“ Farewell, best-beloved of my soul! I have poured my feelings out before thee fearlessly, perhaps too openly; but this is no time for childish reserve,

and my tongue is not ashamed to say more to thee than it has ever before confessed. Whatever may be my destiny, my thoughts will ever pursue thy path, and in spirit I shall be ever with thee, as thy image must always dwell on my heart. Apart from thee, I can never know happiness or peace; yet I will endure in resignation, but not without hope, what we can neither contend against nor avert."

* * * * *

It was at one of those brilliant balls which upon the termination of the war welcomed the arrival of the allied sovereigns, that Maurice, earl of Courland, for his sister's sake, relinquished the seclusion which, from his brooding and melancholy disposition, had become natural to him, and resolved to encounter the gay and busy scenes which those days presented. Many a bright eye rested upon his noble figure, and many an admiring glance followed Clara, as she leaned upon his arm while they slowly passed through the dazzling cortège which surrounded the deliverers of Europe in their more peaceful progress. To her every thing was new and pleasing; to him all was as a dreary blank. Nothing had attraction for his spirit. The gaze of beauty in vain sought a response from his listless glance, and the greetings of friendship, from many a sharer of his toils, were scarce repaid by his melancholy smile. It was plain that the fire of mind and body was alike quenched by some secret

and corroding cause. Some attributed this to the wounds, which had inflicted on him long and acute suffering; but a more keen observer would have traced the workings of a spirit ill at ease in all he did and in the few words he spoke.

Suddenly, as they were passing from one room to another, Clara felt her brother's arm tremble and give way, as though some powerful emotion had shaken his frame. She saw him turn deadly pale, and, almost sinking, he leaned against the wall for support, while his eyes were directed towards two persons whom she then for the first time perceived. A young woman of surpassing beauty was close to them; her raven hair braided closely over her temples, on which its silken and heavy folds reposed in all the luxuriance of southern growth. She was very pale, but her dark and lustrous eyes illuminated a countenance which otherwise might have been of marble. Her companion was a man of a stately form, and by his age and appearance might have been her father. But Clara had no time to gaze or reflect; a cry of surprise broke upon her ear, there was a sudden rush towards her, and in an instant she saw the dark-eyed stranger fainting at her brother's feet. Maurice, as if awakened by a trumpet's note, was by her side, supporting her, and vainly attempting to recall sensation and existence.

It was indeed his long-lost Antonia. Proud as he might well be of such a daughter, Arden, at her

mother's death, had cast away the veil with which family reasons had forced him early in life to conceal his marriage with a foreigner. Had this connexion been published, his fortunes would have been marred and his inheritance forfeited. Maurice's earlier passion had nearly unmasked the mystery. Antonia's resolution, and her filial devotion to his will, had preserved her father's fortune. Her mother survived their departure from the manor-house about two years; and subsequently, while Maurice was abroad, Arden had come into the possession of vast estates, by the death of a proud relation, who never would have consented to their devolving upon the husband of an alien.

The *fête* was over: the lights were gone, and the music had ceased. The gay flirtation, the sentimental wooing, the scheming intrigue, were finished, and the hour of pride and pomp had passed away. Many an innocent bosom had treasured up that night its confided tale of love; many a suitor had been successful, and many a loved one kind. But there was no one heart in all that gay throng so overflowing with all earthly happiness as that of Maurice. His prayers had been at last heard. His long-trying love, his unceasing devotion, had met their reward. Few there are who like him have known the bliss of such an hour; few like him have deserved the full beatitude of woman's passionate love, earned by long sacrifices, by almost hopeless constancy.

And what was her love? All that mortal nature is permitted to feel—all of heaven that is given to earth: the strong tide of passionate yearnings, darkened by long privations, and almost deepened to despair, suddenly revived and regenerated by the new-found streams of boundless affection and passion not disappointed in its idolatry.

A few weeks saw Antonia the bride of Lord Courland; and Clara, when she kissed her new sister, was not the least happy of that happy trio.

LINES

BY MRS. FAIRLIE.

OH! when thou'rt forsaken by those who appear
To dote on each word and each bright look of
thine ;

When those who now call thee fair, lovely, and dear,
Have forgotten their truth, then bethink thee of
mine.

When the gay, vain, and heartless, have taken their
flight,
And left thee to brave the world's tempests alone ;
When the cloud of affliction comes o'er thee to blight,
I'll cling to thee still, when the false ones are flown.

Although 'twas thy beauty first won my young heart,
I'll be true to thee still, though that beauty decay ;
For thy mind could not change, nor its beauty depart,
Though thy bright eyes might fade, and thy bloom
pass away.

I pray that they never may change who profess
To love, to adore thee; but false should they prove,
Oh! trust me, I never will dote on thee less,
For time shall but shew the fond depth of my love.

Then if thou'rt forsaken by those who appear
On each look and each motion of thine, love, to
dwell ;

If those who now call thee fair, lovely, and dear,
Should forget all their faith, think on mine !
Fare thee well !





Portrait of a young woman

Painted by H. T. Ryan

THE
LADY ELIZABETH LEVESON GOWER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE HELIOTROPE."

"Young Peri of the West."—BYRON.

" Se tu segui tua stella,
Non puoi fallire a glorioso porto."—DANTE.

ERE yet the fatal morn had birth
That plunged our race in sadness,
Like *thee* young seraphs walked the earth
In light, and love, and gladness!
Like thee, they wore the form and face
That flush the poet's vision,
And make this mortal dwelling-place
A rival for th' Elysian.

At length, 'tis said, a brighter zone
Of looks so sweet bereft us!
But who shall deem those seraphs flown,
While aught like *thee* is left us?
On thee propitious stars have smiled,
Whose boon no blight can wither;
In thee the cherub and the child
United bloom together!

The stamp of heaven is on thy brow,
To shield the form it blesses ;
Like ringlets from the acacia's bough,
Descend thy shining tresses —
Those sunny locks ! like sibyl leaves,
Spell-bound and mystic letters —
Where Love for future conquest weaves
His sure and silent fetters !

'Tis meet of ALBYN's " premier " tree *
The scion should inherit,
With all that's bright in pedigree,
The all that's pure in spirit !
From stem so fair, 'tis meet the flower
Thus richly should be dowered —
Blend with the hallowed fame of GOWER †
The kingly blood of HOWARD ! ‡

But rank, nor loveliness, alone
Can sanctify the wearer ;
Unless, like *thine*, the heart enthrone
Hopes, gifts, and graces fairer.
Be these thy fadeless diadem !
This maxim ne'er forgetting : —
That Virtue is the brightest gem,
And Beauty but its setting !

* See Genealogical History of Sutherland.

† See the family history.

‡ Ibid.





A NIGHT'S ADVENTURE IN ROME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF ROOKWOOD.

I.

SANTA MARIA MAGGIORE.

“ The pope was saying the high, high mass,
All on St. Peter's day ;
With the power to him given by the saints in heaven
To wash men's sins away.

“ The pope he was saying the blessed mass,
And the people kneel'd around ;
And from each man's soul his sins did pass,
As he kissed the holy ground.”

The Gray Brother.

DURING my brief *séjour* in Rome, in the August of 1830, I chanced to visit the gorgeous church of Santa Maria Maggiore, during the celebration of the anniversary of the Holy Assumption.

It was a glorious sight to one unaccustomed as myself to the imposing religious ceremonials of the catholic church, to witness all the pomp and splendour displayed at this high solemnity — to

gaze down that glittering pile, and mark the various ecclesiastical dignitaries, each in their peculiar and characteristic costume, employed in the ministration of their sacred functions, and surrounded by a wide semicircle of the papal guards, so stationed to keep back the crowd, and who, with their showy scarlet attire and tall halberts, presented just such sprightly and fanciful figures as are often seen in the sketches of Callot. Nor was the brilliant effect of this picture diminished by the sumptuous *cadre* in which it was set. Overhead flamed a roof resplendent with burnished gold; before me rose a canopy supported by pillars of porphyry, and shining with many-coloured stones; while on either hand were chapels devoted to some noble house, and boasting each the marble memorial of a pope. As accessories to the pageant may be added the melodious masses proper to the service, ever and anon chanted by the papal choir, and the almost overpowering perfume diffused by a hundred censers.

Subdued by the odours, the music, and the spectacle, I sank into a state of dreamy enthusiasm, during the continuance of which I almost fancied myself a convert to the faith of Rome, and surrendered myself unreflectingly to an admiration of its errors. As I gazed among the surrounding crowd, the sight of so many prostrate figures, all in attitudes of deepest devotion, satisfied me of the profound religious impression of the ceremonial

upon the mass of the attendants. As elsewhere, this feeling was not universal; and, as elsewhere likewise, more zeal was exhibited by the lower than the higher classes of society; and I occasionally noted amongst the latter the glitter of an eye or the flutter of a bosom, not altogether agitated, I suspect, by holy aspirations; but methought, on the whole, I had never seen such abandonment of soul, such prostration of spirit, in my own colder clime, and during the exercise of my own more chastened creed, as that which in several instances I now beheld; and I almost envied the poor maiden near me, who, abject upon the earth, had washed away her sorrows, and perhaps her sins, in contrite tears.

As such thoughts swept through my mind, I felt a pleasure in singling out particular figures and groups which interested me, from their peculiarity of costume, or from their devotional fervour. Amongst others, a little to my left, I remarked a band of mountaineers from Calabria, for such I judged them to be from their wild and picturesque garb. Deeply was every individual of this little knot of peasantry (*briganti*, for aught I knew, they might be) impressed by the ceremonial. Every eye was humbly cast down; every knee bent; every hand was either occupied in grasping the little crucifix suspended from its owner's neck, in telling the beads of his rosary, or fervently crossed upon his bare and swarthy breast.

While gazing upon this group, I chanced upon an individual whom I had not hitherto noticed, and who now irresistibly attracted my attention. Though a little removed from the Calabrian mountaineers, and reclining against the marble walls of the church, he evidently belonged to the same company ; at least so his attire seemed to indicate, though the noble cast of his countenance was far superior to that of his comrades. He was an old man, with a face of the fine antique Roman stamp—the bold outline of prominent nose, rugged and imperious brow, and proudly-cut chin, which one meets with more frequently in the engravings of Penelli than in the purlieus of the Capitol. His head and chin, as well as his naked breast, were frosted over with the snowy honours of many winters, and their hoar appearance contrasted strikingly with the tawny hue of a skin almost as dark and as lustrous as polished oak. Peasant as he was, there was something of grandeur and majesty in this old man's demeanour and physiognomy. He was one of nature's gentlemen, and bore the impress of her aristocracy boldly carved in every lineament of his lofty features. His head declined backwards, so as completely to expose his long and muscular throat. His arms hung listlessly by his side ; one hand drooped upon the pavement, the other was placed within his breast : his eyes were closed. The old man's garb was of the coarsest fabric ; he wore little beyond a shirt, a

loose vest, a sort of sheepskin cloak, and canvass leggings bound around with leathern thongs. His appearance, however, was above his condition; he became his rags as proudly as a prince would have become his ermined robe.

The more I scrutinised the rigid lines of this old man's countenance, the more I became satisfied that many singular, and perhaps not wholly guiltless, events were connected with his history. The rosary was in his hand—the cross upon his breast—the beads were untold—the crucifix unclasped—no breath of prayer passed his lips. His face was turned heavenward, but his eyes were closed,—he dared not open them. Why came he thither, if he ventured not to pray? Why assumed he a penitential attitude, if he felt no penitence?

So absorbed was I in the perusal of the workings of this old man's countenance as to be scarcely conscious that the service of high mass was concluded, and the crowd within the holy pile fast dispersing. The music was hushed, the robed prelates and their train had disappeared, joyous dames were hastening along the marble aisles to their equipages; all, save a few kneeling figures near the chapels, were departing; and the old man, aware, from the stir and hum prevailing around, that the ceremonial was at an end, arose, stretched out his arm to one of his comrades, a youth who had joined him, and prepared to follow the course.

Was he really blind? Assuredly not. Besides, he walked not as one habituated to the direst calamity that can befall our nature. He staggered in his gait, and reeled to and fro. Yet wherefore did he not venture to unclothe his eyes within the temple of the Most High? What would I not have given to be made acquainted with his history! for I felt that *his* must be a singular one. To lose him now were like glancing at the title-page of an interesting volume, and then closing it for ever. I might satisfy my curiosity at once. He was moving slowly forward, guided by his comrade. In a few seconds it would be too late—he would have vanished from my sight. With hasty footsteps I followed him down the church, and laid my hand, with some violence, upon his shoulder.

The old man started at the touch, and turned. Now, indeed, his eyes were opened wide, and flashing full upon me,—and such eyes! Heretofore I had only dreamed of such. Age had not quenched their lightning, and I quailed beneath the fierce glances which he threw upon me. But if I was at first surprised at the display of anger which I had called forth in him, how much more was I astonished to behold the whole expression of his countenance suddenly change. His eyes continued fixed upon mine as if I had been a basilisk. Apparently, he could not avert them; while his whole frame shivered with emotion. I advanced towards him; he shrank backwards, and, but for the timely

aid of his companion, would have fallen upon the pavement.

At a loss to conceive in what way I could have occasioned him so much alarm, I rushed forward to the assistance of the old man, when his son, for such it subsequently appeared he was, rudely repelled me, and thrust his hand into his girdle, as if to seek for means to prevent further interference. I retired to a little distance, while he sought to raise his father from the ground.

Meanwhile the group had been increased by the arrival of a third party, attracted by the cry the old man had uttered in falling. The newcomer was an Italian gentleman, somewhat stricken in years; of stern and stately deportment, and with something sinister and forbidding in his aspect. He was hastening towards the old man, but he suddenly stopped and was about to retire when he encountered my gaze. As our eyes met he started; and a terror, as sudden and lively as that exhibited by the old man, was at once depicted in his features.

My surprise was now beyond all bounds, and I continued for some moments speechless with astonishment. Not a little of the inexplicable awe which affected the old man and the stranger was communicated to myself. Altogether, we formed what Victor Hugo might call a mysterious and terrible triangle, of which each side bore some strange and unintelligible relation to the other.

The new-comer first recovered his composure, though not without an effort. Coldly turning his heel upon me, he walked towards the old man and shook him forcibly. The latter shrank from his grasp, and endeavoured to avoid him; but it was impossible. The stranger whispered a few words in his ear, of which, from his gestures being directed towards myself, I could guess the import. The old man replied. His action in doing so was that of supplication and despair. The stranger retorted in a wild and vehement manner, and even stamped upon the ground; but the old man still continued to cling to the knees of his superior.

“Weak, superstitious fool!” at length exclaimed the stranger, “I will waste no more words upon thee. Do, or say, what thou wilt; but beware!”—and spurning him haughtily back with his foot, he strode away.

The old man’s reverend head struck against the slabbed floor. His temple was cut open by the fall, and blood gushed in torrents from the wound. Recovering himself, he started to his feet—a knife was instantly in his hand, and he would have pursued and doubtless slain his aggressor, had he not been forcibly withheld by his son, and by a priest who had joined them.

“*Maledizione!*” exclaimed the old man—“a blow from *him*—from *that* hand! I will stab him, though he were at the altar’s foot; though he had a thousand lives, each should pay for it. Release

me, Paulo! release me! for, by Heaven! he dies!"

"Peace, father!" cried the son; still struggling with his sire.

"Thou art not *my* son, to hinder my revenge!" shouted the enraged father. "Dost not see this blood—*my* blood—thy father's blood?—and thou holdest me back! Thou shouldst have struck him to the earth for the deed—but he was a noble, and thou daredst not lift thy hand against him!"

"Wouldst thou have had me slay him in this holy place?" exclaimed Paulo, reddening with anger and suppressed emotion.

"No—no," returned the old man, in an altered voice; "not here—not *here*—though 'twere but just retribution. But I will find other means of vengeance. I will denounce him—I will betray all, though it cost me my own life! He shall die by the hands of the common executioner;—there is one shall testify for me!" And he pointed to me.

Again I advanced towards him.

"If thou hast aught to disclose pertaining to the Holy Church, I am ready to listen to thee, my son," said the priest; "but reflect well ere thou bringest any charge thou mayst not be able to substantiate against one who stands so high in her esteem as him thou wouldst accuse."

The son gave his father a meaning look, and

whispered somewhat in his ear. The old man became suddenly still.

"Right — right," said he; "I have bethought me. 'Twas but a blow. He is wealthy — I am poor;—there is no justice for the poor in Rome."

"My purse is at your service," said I, interfering; "you shall have my aid."

"*Your aid!*" echoed the old man, staring at me — "will *you* assist me, signor?"

"I will."

"Enough. I may claim fulfilment of your promise."

"Stop, old man," said I; "answer me one question ere you depart. Whence arose your recent terrors?"

"You shall know hereafter, signor," said he; "I must now begone;" glancing suspiciously around. "We shall meet again. Follow me not," continued he, seeing I was bent upon obtaining further explanation of the mystery. "You will learn nothing now, and only endanger my safety. *Ad-dio, signor!*" And with hasty steps he quitted the church, accompanied by his son.

"Who is that old man?" I demanded of the priest.

"I am as ignorant as yourself," replied he; "but he must be looked to: he talks threateningly." And he beckoned to an attendant.

"Who was he who struck him?" was my next inquiry.

"One of our wealthiest nobles," replied he; "and an assured friend of the church. We could ill spare him. Do not lose sight of them;" added he to the attendant, "and let the *sbirri* track them to their haunts. They must not be suffered to go forth to-night. A few hours' restraint will cool their hot Calabrian blood."

"But the name of the noble, father?" said I, renewing my inquiries.

"I must decline further questioning," returned the priest, coldly. "I have other occupation; and meanwhile it will be well to have these stains effaced, which may else bring scandal on these holy walls. You will excuse me, my son." Saying which, he bowed and retired.

I made fruitless inquiries for the old man at the door of the church. He was gone; none of the bystanders who had seen him go forth knew whither.

Dissatisfied and discontented, I wandered amid the most unfrequented quarters of Rome throughout the day, in the hope of meeting with the old Calabrian, but in vain. As, however, I entered the court-yard of my hotel, I fancied I discovered, amongst the lounging assemblage gathered round the door, the dark eyes of the younger mountaineer. In this I might have been mistaken; no one answering to his description had been seen near the house.

II.

THE MARCHESA.

“ Une chose ténébreuse faite par des hommes ténébreux.”

Lucrece Borgia.

ON that same night I bent my steps towards the Colosseum ; and, full of my adventure of the morning, found myself, not without apprehension, involved within its labyrinthine passages. Accompanied by a monk, who, with a small horn lantern in his hand, acted as my guide, I fancied that, by its uncertain light, I could discover stealthy figures lurking within the shades of the ruin.

Whatever suspicions I might entertain, I pursued my course in silence. Emerging from the *vomitorio*, we stood upon the steps of the colossal amphitheatre. The huge pile was bathed in rosy moonlight, and reared itself in serene majesty before my view.

While indulging in a thousand speculations, occasioned by the hour and the spot, I suddenly perceived a figure on a point of the ruin immediately above me. Nothing but the head was visible ; but that was placed in bold relief against the beaming sky of night, and I recognised it at once. No nobler Roman head had ever graced the circus when Rome was in her zenith. I shouted to the old Calabrian, for he it was I beheld. Almost

ere the sound had left my lips, he had disappeared. I made known what I had seen to the monk. He was alarmed — urged our instant departure, and advised me to seek the assistance of the sentinel stationed at the entrance to the pile. To this proposal I assented; and having descended the vasty steps, and crossed the open arena, we arrived, without molestation, at the door-way.

The sentinel had allowed no one to pass him. He returned with me to the circus; and, after an ineffectual search amongst the ruins, volunteered his services to accompany me homewards through the Forum. I declined his offer, and shaped my course towards a lonesome *vicolo* on the right. This was courting danger; but I cared not, and walked slowly forward through the deserted space.

Scarcely had I proceeded many paces, when I heard footsteps swiftly approaching; and, ere I could turn round, my arms were seized from behind, and a bandage was passed across my eyes. All my efforts at liberation were unavailing; and, after a brief struggle, I remained passive.

“Make no noise,” said a voice which I knew to be that of the old man, “and no harm shall befall you. You must come with us. Ask no questions, but follow.”

I suffered myself to be led, without further opposition, whithersoever they listed. We walked for it might be half an hour, much beyond the walls of Rome, so far as I could judge, who was but

little acquainted with the localities of the city. I had to scramble through many ruins, and frequently stumbled over various inequalities of ground. I now felt the fresh breeze of night blowing over the wide campagna, and my conductors moved swiftly onwards as we trod upon its elastic turf.

At length they came to a halt. My bandage was removed, and I beheld myself beneath the arch of an aqueduct, which spanned the moonlit plain. A fire was kindled beneath this arch, and the ruddy flame licked its walls. Around the blaze were grouped the little band of peasantry I had beheld within the church, in various and picturesque attitudes. They greeted my conductors on their arrival, and glanced inquisitively at me, but did not speak to me. The elder Calabrian, whom they addressed as Christofano, asked for a glass of *acquavite*, which he handed respectfully to me. I declined the offer, but he pressed it upon me.

"You will need it, signor," said he; "you have much to do to-night. You fear, perhaps, it is drugged. Behold!" and he drank it off.

I could not, after this, refuse his pledge. "And now, signor," said the old man, removing to a little distance from the group, "may I crave a word with you — your name?"

As I had no reason for withholding it, I told him how I was called.

"Hum! Had you no relation of the name of——?"

"None whatever." And I sighed, for I thought of my desolate condition.

"Strange!" muttered he; adding, with a grim smile,—"but, however, likenesses are easily accounted for."

"What likeness?" asked I. "Whom do I resemble? and what is the motive of your inexplicable conduct?"

"You shall hear," replied he, frowning gloomily. "Step aside, and let us get within the shade of these arches, out of the reach of yonder listeners. The tale I have to tell is for your ears alone."

I obeyed him; and we stood beneath the shadow of the aqueduct.

"Years ago," began the old man, "an Englishman, in all respects resembling yourself, equally well endowed in person, and equally young, came to Rome, and took up his abode within the eternal city. He was of high rank in his own country, and was treated with the distinction due to his exalted station here. At that time I dwelt with the Marchese di ——. I was his confidential servant—his adviser—his friend. I had lived with his father—carried him as an infant—sporting with him as a boy—loved and served him as a man. Loved him, I say; for, despite his treatment of me, I loved him then as much as I abhor him now. Well! signor, to my story. If his youth had been profligate, his manhood was not less depraved; it was devoted to cold, calculating

libertinism. Soon after he succeeded to the estates and title of his father, he married. That he loved his bride, I can scarcely believe; for, though he was wildly jealous of her, he was himself unfaithful, and she knew it. In Italy, revenge, in such cases, is easily within a woman's power; and, for aught I know, the marchesa might have meditated retaliation. My lord, however, took the alarm, and thought fit to retire to his villa without the city, and for a time to remain secluded within its walls. It was at this crisis that the Englishman I have before mentioned arrived in Rome. My lady, who mingled little with the gaieties of the city, had not beheld him; but she could not have been unacquainted with him by report, as every tongue was loud in his praises. A rumour of his successes with other dames had reached my lord; nay, I have reason to believe he had been thwarted by the handsome Englishman in some other quarter, and he sedulously prevented their meeting. An interview, however, *did* take place between them, and in an unexpected manner. It was the custom then, as now, upon particular occasions, to drive, during the heats of summer, within the Piazza Navona, which is flooded with water. One evening the marchesa drove thither: she was unattended, except by myself. Our carriage happened to be stationed near that of the young Englishman."

"The marchesa was beautiful, no doubt," said I, interrupting him.

"Most beautiful!" replied he; "and so your countryman appeared to think, for he was lost in admiration of her. I am not much versed in the language of the eyes, but his were too eloquent and expressive not to be understood. I watched my mistress narrowly. It was evident from her glowing cheek, though her eyes were cast down, that she was not insensible to his regards. She turned to play with her dog, a lovely little greyhound, which was in the carriage beside her, and patted it carelessly with the glove which she held in her hand. The animal snatched the glove from her grasp, and, as he bounded backwards, fell over the carriage side. My lady uttered a scream at the sight, and I was preparing to extricate the struggling dog, when the Englishman plunged into the water. In an instant he had restored her favourite to the marchesa, and received her warmest acknowledgments. From that moment an intimacy commenced, which was destined to produce the most fatal consequences to both parties."

"Did you betray them?" asked I, somewhat impatiently.

"I was then the blind tool of the marchese. I did so," replied the old man. "I told him all particulars of the interview. He heard me in silence, but grew ashy pale with suppressed rage. Bidding me redouble my vigilance, he left me. My lady was now scarcely ever out of my sight; when one evening, a few days after what had occurred, she walked

forth alone upon the garden terrace of the villa. Her guitar was in her hand, and her favourite dog by her side. I was at a little distance, but wholly unperceived. She struck a few plaintive chords upon her instrument, and then, resting her chin upon her white and rounded arm, seemed lost in tender reverie. Would you had seen her, signor, as I beheld her then, or as one other beheld her! you would acknowledge that you had never met with her peer in beauty. Her raven hair fell in thick tresses over shoulders of dazzling whiteness and justest proportions. Her deep dark eyes were thrown languidly on the ground, and her radiant features were charged with an expression of profound and pensive passion.

“In this musing attitude she continued for some minutes, when she was aroused by the gambols of her dog, who bore in his mouth a glove which he had found. As she took it from him, a letter dropped upon the floor. Had a serpent glided from its folds, it could not have startled her more. She gazed upon the paper, offended but irresolute. Yes, she was *irresolute*; and you may conjecture the rest. She paused; and by that pause was lost. With a shrinking grasp she stooped to raise the letter. Her cheeks, which had grown deathly pale, again kindled with blushes as she perused it. She hesitated—cast a bewildering look towards the mansion—placed the note within her bosom—and plunged into the orange-bower.”

“ Her lover awaited her there ? ”

“ I saw them meet. I heard his frenzied words — his passionate entreaties. He urged her to fly — she resisted. He grew more urgent — more impassioned. She uttered a faint cry, and I stood before them. The Englishman’s hand was at my throat, and his sword at my breast, with the swiftness of thought; and but for the screams of my mistress, that instant must have been my last. At her desire he relinquished his hold of me; but her cries had reached other ears, and the marchese had arrived to avenge his injured honour. He paused not to inquire the nature of the offence; but, sword in hand, assailed the Englishman, bidding me remove his lady. The clash of their steel was drowned by her shrieks as I bore her away; but I knew the strife was desperate. Before I gained the house my lady had fainted; and, committing her to the charge of other attendants, I returned to the terrace. I met my master slowly walking homewards. His sword was gone — his brow was bent — he shunned my sight. I knew what had happened, and did not approach him. He sought his wife. What passed in that interview was never disclosed, but it may be guessed at from its result. That night the marchesa left her husband’s halls — never to return. Next morn I visited the terrace where she had received the token. The glove was still upon the ground. I picked it up and carried it to the marchese, detailing the whole occurrence to him. He took it, and

vowed as he took it that his vengeance should never rest satisfied till that glove had been steeped in her blood."

"And he kept his vow?" asked I, shuddering.

"Many months elapsed ere its accomplishment. Italian vengeance is slow but sure. To all outward appearance, he had forgotten his faithless wife. He had even formed a friendship with her lover, which he did the more effectually to blind his ultimate designs. Meanwhile, time rolled on, and the marchesa gave birth to a child—the offspring of her seducer."

"Great God!" exclaimed I, "was that child a boy?"

"It was—but listen to me; my tale draws to a close. One night, during the absence of the Englishman, by secret means we entered the palazzo where the marchesa resided. We wandered from room to room till we came to her chamber. She was sleeping with her infant by her side. The sight madened the marchese. He would have struck the child, but I withheld his hand. He relented. He bade me make fast the door. He approached the bed. I heard a rustle—a scream. A white figure sprang from out the couch. In an instant the light was extinguished—there was a blow—another—and all was over. I threw open the door. The marchese came forth. The corridor in which we stood was flooded with moonlight. A glove was in his hand—it was dripping with blood. His

oath was fulfilled — his vengeance complete — no, not complete, for the Englishman yet lived."

"What became of him?" I inquired.

"Ask me not," replied the old man; "you were at the Chiesa Santa Maria Maggiore this morning: could those stones speak, they might tell a fearful tale."

"And that was wherefore you dared not unclose your eyes within those holy precincts? — a film of blood floated between you and heaven."

The old man shuddered, but replied not.

"And the child?" I asked, after a pause; "what of their wretched offspring?"

"It was conveyed to England by a friend of its dead father. Were he alive, that boy would be about your age, signor."

"Indeed!" said I; a horrible suspicion flashing across my mind.

"After the Englishman's death," continued Christofano, "my master began to treat me with a coldness and suspicion which increased daily. I was a burden to him, and he was resolved to rid himself of me. I spared him the trouble—quitted Rome—sought the mountains of the Abruzzi—and thence wandered to the fastnesses of Calabria, and became—no matter what. Here I am, Heaven's appointed minister of vengeance. The marchese dies to-night!"

"To-night! Old man," echoed I, horror-stricken, "add not crime to crime. If he has indeed been guilty of the foul offence you have named, let him

be dealt with according to the offended laws of his country. Seek not you to pervert the purposes of justice."

"Justice!" echoed Christofano, scornfully.

"Ay, justice. You are poor and powerless, but means may be found to aid you. I will assist the rightful course of vengeance."

"You *shall* assist it. I have sworn he dies before the dawn, and the hand to strike the blow shall be your own."

"Mine?—never!"

"Your own life will be the penalty of your obstinacy, if you refuse; nor will your refusal save him. By the Mother of Heaven, he dies! and by your hand. You saw how he was struck by your resemblance to the young Englishman this morning in the chiesa. It is wonderful! I know not who or what you are; but to me you are an instrument of vengeance, and as such I shall use you. The blow dealt by you will seem the work of retribution; and I care not if you strike twice, and make me your second mark."

Ere I could reply he called to his comrades, and in a few moments we were speeding across the campagna.

We arrived at a high wall: the old man conducted us to a postern gate, which he opened. We entered a garden filled with orange-trees, the perfume of which loaded the midnight air. We heard the plash of a fountain at a distance, and the thrill-

ing notes of a nightingale amongst some taller trees. The moon hung like a lamp over the belvidere of the proud villa. We strode along a wide terrace edged by a marble balustrade. The old man pointed to an open summer-house terminating the walk, and gave me a significant look, but he spoke not. A window thrown open admitted us to the house. We were within a hall crowded with statues, and traversed noiselessly its marble floors. Passing through several chambers, we then mounted to a corridor, and entered an apartment which formed the ante-room to another beyond it. Placing his finger upon his lips, and making a sign to his comrades, Christofano opened a door and disappeared. There was a breathless pause for a few minutes, during which I listened intently, but caught only a faint sound as of the snapping of a lock.

Presently the old man returned.

"He sleeps," said he, in a low, deep tone to me,—"sleeps as his victim slept—sleeps without a dream of remorse; and he shall awake, as she did, to despair. Come into his chamber!"

We obeyed. The door was made fast within side.

The curtains of the couch were withdrawn, and the moonlight streamed full upon the face of the sleeper. He was hushed in profound repose. No visions seemed to haunt his peaceful slumbers. Could guilt sleep so soundly? I half doubted the old man's story.

Placing us within the shadow of the canopy, Christofano approached the bed. A stiletto glittered in his hand. "Awake!" cried he, in a voice of thunder. The sleeper started at the summons.

I watched his countenance. He was one who blanched not even in moments like to this. He read Christofano's errand in his eye. But he quailed not.

"Cowardly assassin!" cried he; "you have well consulted your own safety in stealing on my sleep."

"And who taught me the lesson?" fiercely interrupted the old man. "Am I the first that have stolen on midnight slumber? Gaze upon this! When and how did it acquire its dye?" and he held forth a glove, which looked blackened and stained in the moonlight.

The marchese groaned aloud.

"My cabinet broken open!" at length exclaimed he—"villain! how dared you do this? But why do I rave? I know with whom I have to deal." Uttering which he sprung from his couch with the intention of grappling with the old man; but Christofano retreated, and at that instant the brigands who rushed to his aid thrust me forward. I was face to face with the marchese.

The apparition of the murdered man could not have staggered him more. His limbs were stiffened by the shock, and he remained in an attitude of freezing terror.

"Is he come for vengeance?" ejaculated he.

"Even so!" cried Christofano. "Give him the weapon!" And a stiletto was thrust into my hand. But I heeded not the steel. I tore open my bosom—a small diamond cross was within the folds.

"Know you this?" I demanded of the marchese.

"It was my wife's!" shrieked he in amazement.

"It was upon the infant's bosom as he slept by her side on that fatal night," said Christofano. "I saw it sparkle there."

"That infant was myself—that wife my mother!" cried I.

"The murderer stands before you! Strike!" exclaimed Christofano.

I raised the dagger. The marchese stirred not.—I could not strike.

"Do you hesitate?" angrily exclaimed Christofano.

"He has not the courage," returned the younger Calabrian. "You reproached me this morning with want of filial duty. Behold how a son can avenge his father!" And he plunged his stiletto within the bosom of the marchese.

"*Your* father is not yet avenged, young man!" cried Christofano, in a terrible tone. "You alone can avenge him!"

Ere I could withdraw its point the old man had rushed upon the dagger which I held extended in my grasp.

He fell without a single groan.

A NIGHT MEDITATION.

BY THE LADY EMMELINE STUART WORTLEY.

NIGHT—the old, solemn, consecrated Night—
Is round me now, in all her conquering might
And sweepy pride of sway. All the glad dyes
Of Day have melted from the mantled skies,
And the flower-scented, soft, caressing breeze
Hath fallen asleep amidst the cradling trees ;
And all this work-day world's harsh sounds are o'er,
And all its waves lie smoothed upon the shore.
What touching holiness is in this hour !
In its adoring stillness what deep power !
And in its thrilling silence ! It is *now*
That most we Meditation's reign avow ;
And own a bosomed paradise within,
Unwatched by dread-arm'd powers—and yet by sin
Undesecrated ; for do we not wear
A robe of purity while lingering there ?
My soul confesses this imposing thrall,
While, like a sea of frozen billows, all
Seems to suspend frail Life, with its brief ties,
Its passions, sorrows, powers, and energies !
My soul consents unto this charmed sway,
That wins the trouble from its dreams away ;

And in adoring quietude remains
A captive, fettered by most glorious chains—
Chains that so tenderly are round it twined,
That it were grief t'unlink them and unwind.
Oh, night! oh, sphery season of the soul!
When deeper consciousness pervades its whole
Of deep existence—when more liberal scope
Seems granted to the glad wing of its hope—
When it casts down awhile its weight of care,
To breathe more vigorous, more inspiring air—
Night! thou bring'st star-bright thoughts and white-
robed dreams

Unto our spirits; and with angel-gleams
Clear'st off the earthly mists thick gathered there,
And make'st them calm and wise, and pure and fair.
Yea, and ev'n now through my lulled mind doth pass,
As shapes that hover o'er some wizard's glass—
A mute procession of mysterious things,
Moving serene upon their viewless wings!
High phantasies, bright visions, kindling hopes,
Silent as clouds that down the western slopes
Glide calmly; while the visions of my thought
Pass dreamily, as some dim goal they sought—
To life-like lines of tenderest beauty wrought.
How wonderful! how beautiful is all!
My soul! well may'st thou bless so bright a thrall!
Oh, skies! inscribed with argent charact'ry!
Oh, holiest meanings in their depths that lie!
Oh, wordless eloquence of all around!
Oh, most consummate harmony without sound!

Oh, vict'ry ! without wrath, or wrong, or strife,
Deep Universe of Feeling and of Life !
Oh, myst'ry of all mysteries ! widely spread
About us—while these full, strong hours are sped :
Myst'ry ? —not so ! —we know what we survey,
E'en in this dungeon-tenement of clay !
We know how to translate this wondrous whole,
And lay its thrice-bless'd meanings to our soul ;
Yea, all we trembling, yet rejoicing, view,
From yon dread midnight-heaven's deep shadowy
blue,
With stars of trembling light pierced through and
through,
To the dim earth, and its wide stretching plains,
Where now such soothing stillness brooding reigns ;
All lights, all shades, all substances, all forms,
All hues, all aspects, — from the heaven that storms
The sense, with splendour of sublimities,
To that sweet gloom, that softly on it lies
E'en as a weight of rest ; yea, earth and sky,
Light, darkness, form — the wide, the deep, the high,
The near, the distant, the minute, the vast,
The wind's low whisper, or the storm's loud blast —
All — all around, beneath, beyond, above,
Can we translate into that one word — Love !





HELEN.

BY BARRY CORNWALL.

Now, where's the love-born lady,—Eleanore?
Fled to the sea?—or sky? Is the bright air
Made brighter by her glance? or doth she rest
Her beauty on some lone and golden orb,
After her smiling conquests here below,
Reposing amongst flowers? Return, bright soul!
Come forth, like blooming Summer, when she starts
Out of the ground, triumphant! Quick, come forth,
Like flooding sunshine, or like Night, when Heaven
All opens with its stars,—like *any* thing,
So 't be like *thee*, gracious and beautiful!
. . . Behold, the gallery's full,—and she's not here!
Here's one is fair—another, gentle-eyed—
A third, grown dim with woe—a fourth, serene—
A fifth, embathed in laughing loveliness;
But *SHE*,—the jewel of imperial price,
Is absent from th' array! Pass to the next.

Look! here shines one through tears. Beneath her
palms
(Press'd to a burning heart, and rankling there,)

Lies the bold image of a valiant man,—
One whom the lady loved. Shall we not tell
The story of their love? If love be true,
Albeit it yield a simple history,
'Tis worth the telling: good it sheds o'er all;—
Some hearts it softens, quenching hate or scorn;
Some hearts it feeds with tender nourishment;
In some it calmeth grief; to some it bears
Example how to bear, and how to do
In difficult straits and sad extremity;
So, listen to the tale:—we'll gather for thee
The fading thoughts of half-forgotten years.

THE old, old manor-house, where D'Arcy gave
Twice ten grave years to thought and learned themes,
Stands now deserted. Near a lazy stream,
That struggles through the rushes, and creeps round
A headland rank with weeds (once lost in flowers!),
The melancholy mansion rears its head.
The clock is dumb: the snaky ivy clings
Round wall and window; and funereal rooks
Keep solemn watch above, in those dark elms,
Or send their hollow words, at morn and eve,
Through the sad silence! Here proud D'Arcy dwelt,
(High-born, learn'd, courteous, liberal, brave—but
proud)—
With his sole daughter, Helen.

How D'Arcy loved his pale deep-thoughted child,
And how he trained her up, from cradled years

To budding girlhood, shall not now be told.
She grew up to that time when the young heart
Looks deep into itself, and asks, in doubt,
What heaven is wanting to make life divine,
And finds that it is—love. She loved. O Love!
How hearts will dream, — that *thou*, born amidst
tears,

Must yield bright days at last! — And why not so?
The stormy deluge which doth drown the land,
Wasting the fields in July's heat, is girt
With rainbows at its close: and *then* come fast
(As Joy will follow Hope) radiant hours,
Wherein the sun, laughing the rains away,
Comes ripening, with his burning eastern kiss,
The fruits and yellowing corn. Ay, thus it is
With the seasons, not with love. A youth of hope,
A manhood full of fears, an age of woe —
And so Love's tale is told!

Bright Helen loved
The soldier Ormond. *Who* he was—what blood
He bore in his proud veins—whose eyes of fire—
Whose ample forehead and thrice noble form
(Where strength by grace was tempered)—no one
knew.

He came—a stranger. No chance rank had *he*:
The blind fool, Fortune, had neglected him.
A peasant—or a foundling—no one knew
His birth or lineage. Courtier kings had not
Called "Cousin" in his ear, nor lords nor knights

Claimed friendship. Even ladies' eyes—our stars,
(Stars which we read, when we would know our
doom !)

Had passed him in their round. At last, he came
To where proud D'Arcy dwelt with his pale girl,
So lonely in their old, old manor-house,
And found a welcome. He could read with one
The Roman and the Greek philosophy ;
And with the other turned those tablets o'er
Which Ariosto writ ; or where the dark
Florentine, Dante, with his iron hand
Sculptured the doom of love-lost Beatrice !
Else (with *her* still) he'd wander, all day long,
Through dreams perplexed and sad, which Shake-
speare wrought
And then unravelled, with that curious skill
Which made him wonderful amongst the wise,
And peerless amidst all ! And thus *they* dreamed
The spring-time and the summer hours away !

At last, the soldier, who had faced the world
(War, envy, hatred, pride, and rank, and power,
In all its tyrant shapes), was smit—by love !
And was there *hope* for him who sought so much ?
He looked,—and she replied ; not in bright smiles,
(That sweet mute music !) nor in whispers soft,
But with compressed lips, and restless eyes,
And cheeks, first passion-stain'd with the bright
blood,
And then left all to paleness. How he read

Those burning tidings little need recount ;
The kiss, warm and prolonged, shed on her lips,
Told all that's wanted. Fair, and young, and true,
And fearless, they at once abandoned them
To love, which was their fate. They gazed, and
sighed,
(Too happy far for smiles), and built up homes,
Arabian-like,—enchanted,—amongst flowers,—
In sheltered valleys, where the west-wind haunts,—
By streams, or falling fountains ; and they hoped
(How love will hope !) to quell the father's pride,
By reason or with tears.

Thus days, and weeks,
And months fled on, (and they still loving more,)
Till,—on an awful morning,—D'Arcy, tired
Of metaphysic toil, and barren books,
Came suddenly upon them. There they sate,
Beside each other, murmuring honey words ;
His arm around her waist ; she, braiding slow
Her ringlets like the crow's-wing, listening sighed,
And smiled, and all believed—yet still he spoke,
And still she listened, till a word—as stern
As tempests when they strike a forest down—
Burst in between them ! Ah ! no need to turn,
To ask who came, nor why. A moment's space
Ungraved a world of knowledge. D'Arcy spoke,
Bidding, with no stern voice, his child retire,
Into whose eyes he looked reproaches deep.
Then turned he to the youth : “ For *you*, young sir,

When you have earned a name, — (a heritage
 You want and must achieve)—I may peruse
 Your claims—bold claims—with less unwilling eyes :
 At present, you are wanting in that wealth
 Which D'Arcy's daughter asks. 'Tis not for all
 To stand up heir and claim a laurell'd name ;
 But — 'tis for all to *win* one. Do thou this ;
 And then claim D'Arcy's Helen. Now, farewell !”

Dark fell that night : the next day, heralded
 By funeral clouds and wailing showers, came on,
 And brought, to banish'd Ormond, *her* farewell :
 “ For a short time, farewell !” Thus sighed the girl ;
 “ Some chance of war—some eye, whose light can find
 The merit of the humble, shall find *thee*.
 Joy will not shun us ever : days must come
 When we'll endure a heaven of happiness !
 Meantime, a brief farewell !—My friend—my love—
 I'll wait for thee (be sure !) till Time shall stop,
 Or Death untwine our vows. Forget not this !
 If beggary,—or wounds,—or blind disease,
 Or all misfortunes which shed pain on men,
 Strike *thee*, I'll still be here,—still fond and true,
 Thy lover and thy wife,—even to death !”

Pass we his answer : he replied,—and went ;
 Leaving behind him England, and resolved
 To find where Victory lingered still unwon.

And how then fared the bride, — her soldier
 gone?—

She mourned, yet scarce despaired; soothing her
 soul
 By pondering o'er his likeness, well portrayed,
 And, like a relic of the saintly times,
 Kept close and worshipped. When her heart *indeed*
 Sank in despair, Amica, her dear friend,
 (Who shared her joy and grief, but most her grief),
 Would lure her out of woe, with cheerful songs,
 With sunshine smiles, and ever-varying themes,
 And, sometimes, e'en with tears. Such sorrow, shed
 For friendship, and no more, won soft return :
 And Helen would forget her griefs awhile,
 And pay her back with smiles, — sometimes with
 strains
 Of melancholy music, such as these :—

HER SONG.

Sing no more ! Thy heart is crossed
 By some dire thing :
 Sing no more ! Thy lute has lost
 Its one sweet string.
 The music of the heart and lute
 Are mute—are mute !

Laugh no more ! The earth hath taught
 A false, fond strain :
 Laugh no more ! Thy soul hath caught
 The grave's first stain.
 The pleasures of the world are known,
 And flown—and flown !

Weep no more ! The fiercest pains
Were love and pride :
Weep no more ! The world's strong chains
Are cast aside.
And all the war of life must cease
In peace—in peace !

Thus might she still, scarce half-o'ercome by fate,
Have mourned a long life out : but tidings came
Of a fierce battle fought on foreign lands,
A common tale of war, ending in death—
Just heard, and then forgot. Here —amidst foes,
And shouts, and clarions, and the roar of guns,
And cries of conquest,—Helen's Ormond fell !
A bullet, wing'd with death, rushed through his
heart :
He sprang—fell back, and died ! He died, fond
soldier !
Upon his colours, which received no stain,
Save what fell with his blood.

From that day forth,
The maiden widow uttered not a word.
She could not die ; for Nature is oft-times strong,
And, for a season, struggles with our doom.
'Twas thus with her : No tear relieved her wo,
Nor sound betrayed it ; but her blank, cold eye,
Her lips' lost colour, and her stony cheek,
And all her meagre limbs, wasted to bone,
Pointed the way she trod. At last,—she went

Down unto death ! Without a sigh she went,
Without a sign, or tremble,—suddenly ;
Scarce calmer than before, and not more pale ;
But happier than in life. . . .

No epitaph

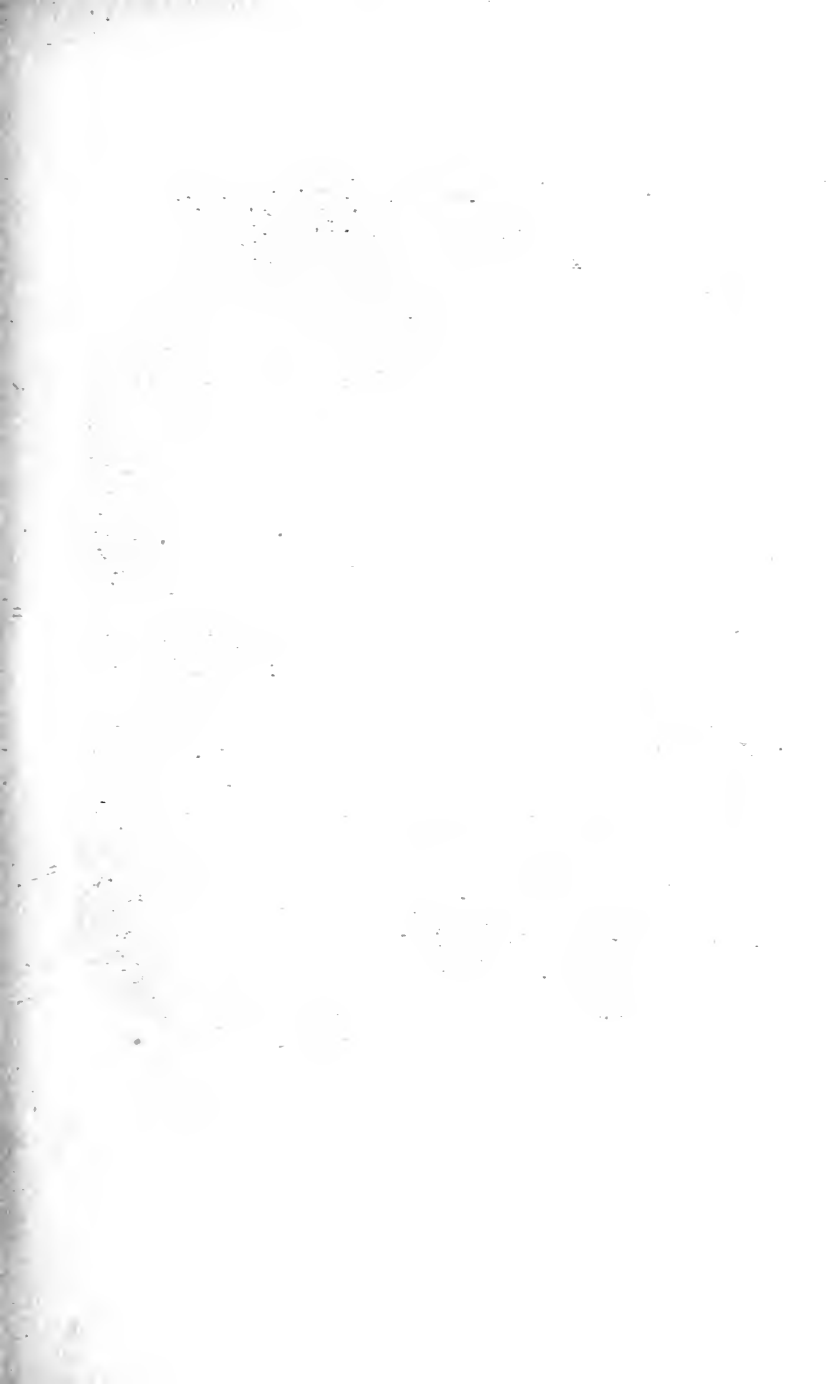
Tells forth her story to the curious eye ;
But gossips, who are fond of mournful tales,
Will still recount her fate when nights grow long,
Weaving some moral from 't ; and they relate,
That he who gave her life and stole 't away,
Went raving mad and died,—a childless man,
And friendless,—with none by, save hired hands,
Who laid him, without pity, in his grave.

KNIGHT CONRAD OF THE BOLZENBURG.

A GERMAN LEGEND.

BY LORD ALBERT CONYNNGHAM.

CONRAD of the Bolzenburg, Knight Hospitalier of St. John of Jerusalem, returned to his native land by permission of the Grand Master of his order, to take possession of the inheritance to which he had succeeded,—the castle of his ancestors, that was situated on a pleasing eminence in a forest at a distance of two hours' walk from the eastern bank of the before-mentioned river. On St. Pancras' day of the year of our Lord eleven hundred and eighty-six, he rode across the drawbridge into the court of his castle in a mood so melancholy that he almost felt as if the grave opened before him, and that a return to life and liberty was precluded him. The few vassals who guarded the castle saluted their new master, drumming forth their welcome. This, the echoes of the gloomy walls and from the forest repeated in sounds that, melancholy as he was, appeared to him to resemble the croaking of frogs and the hooting of owls, presaging him evil. He has-





tilly took the resolution, that, after a short stay to rest from his journey and arrange his affairs, he would quit that gloomy castle, and hasten back to the lands of the East, where Sultan Saladin, with his Saracens, was pressing hard the pious king of Jerusalem, Guy of Lusignan; and where the humane offices of the Hospitalier were more than ever wanted in the constant succession of hostilities. The knight, therefore, determined to appoint an administrator to his property, endow the church with his revenues, and then return with all speed to the place whence he had come.

But the plans of mortals are not those of the Divinity; and it was here shewn that man may indeed purpose, but that it is God that directs; for, after every thing had been long arranged for his departure, the knight remained at his castle, as if bound to it by a spell: he had not the power to quit it, and return to Jerusalem and his pious vocation.

The inmates of the castle, and especially Father Cyprian, the chaplain, could not imagine what had rendered their young high-spirited lord so quiet and domestic, avoiding banquets and revelry, and devoting himself to the chase and to solitary walks and rides, whence he each time returned more pensive than he went forth: the time fixed for his departure was also constantly deferred, and was, at length, no longer even mentioned. Had they known the adventure which had befallen the knight, their surprise and their useless and disquieting speculations would

have been at an end; but that adventure rested in a close, reserved breast, and a sweet and clandestine love in the deepest recesses of Conrad's heart.

It happened on a lovely summer's day that the knight had ridden farther into the forest than usual, and had even advanced to the banks of the river, the present site of the little town of Grünan, but at that time hidden in the wilderness of pines and oaks that clothed the land. The occasional hut of a charcoal burner was alone to be met with. Evening had come upon him. He permitted his horse to feed at liberty on the green turf; and, extending himself on a soft flowery bank, turned his longing thoughts towards his beloved companions, and the Holy City, which he had quitted and which he hoped soon again to see. The plaintive melody of the nightingale, and the pale moon's magic light, here illuminating and there transforming into strange shapes the old stems and the thick masses of foliage, assisted to transport him in thought to that far country where our Lord wandered whilst on earth—to the banks of the Jordan, and the cypresses of the Mount of Olives. Long would it have been ere he had awakened from that sweet trance, had not a slight rustling attracted his attention. It came from a flowery thicket upon the verge of a fountain, not far from where he was reclining. On turning in the direction of the sound, he perceived a young and lovely female figure, slender and graceful as a Greek maid of the island of Candia. A long white veil

flowed down over her light hair, and the clear fountain, on which she intently gazed, reflected her pale beauteous features.

Startled at this apparition, of which the knight could not imagine either whence it came or what it was doing there in the stillness of the night, a chill came over him like the shudder at the sight of a spectre; and with a feeling of awe he rode homewards, his snorting horse trembling beneath him.

But indelibly had that maiden's image graven itself on his heart, which, till that day, had been steeled to the love of woman. He was also tormented by curiosity, longing to discover who was that graceful being — where she dwelt — and how she chanced to have sought that secluded spot. He therefore never failed to return each evening to that fountain, and in sweet converse with the lovely maid, who appeared not indifferent to the handsome knight, daily buried more deeply the shaft of love in the recesses of his heart.

Vain were his inquiries after the name and home of her who had charmed him; never would she bless his sight but in the moon's pale beam; and when he pressed her with, "Lovely maid, tell me where your devoted lover may meet you by daylight—when the warmth of day rests upon the roses, and around us, move all that live and love,"—her fair face was averted, and she whispered softly, "The sun-beam is not my home; I delight in the pale lustre of the sparkling stars and the refreshing

dew of night—then only shall my beloved meet me.” With answers such as this he was forced to content himself, as well as with merely seeing and exchanging words of tenderness with his soul’s idol; for not the slightest favour of material love was granted him. Often did he extend his arms to embrace her—often bend to kiss the rosy mouth that breathed upon him with the fragrance of a lily: but the air alone met his embrace—the blooming honeysuckle received his kiss, whilst the coy maid contrived to escape from him.

At length the knight, no longer able to bear the torments of separation, determined to withdraw himself from his order, and conduct the mistress of his heart to his home as his lawful wife. Seated by her side in the stillness of night, on the fountain’s bank, he told her that life without her was but a tasteless banquet; that he had not taken the vows of celibacy; and that nothing prevented his accompanying her to the altar, provided she was not unfavourable to his love, that she was equal to him in birth, and owned the same religion. Sighs only were the answer received; and when he saw a stream of tears coursing down her beauteous cheeks, and mixing with the waters of the fountain, his heart failed him, and he said, “You weep, dear maid! I am convinced you love me; yet your sighs and your silent grief betray that some secret weighs upon your mind, and that it is an obstacle to my hopes. Lay aside your mystery, and acquaint me whether you are, like me,

of noble birth; let me know your country, the site of your castle, and your parents' names. Should you even be born from among the dregs of the people, who bear the fetters of vassalage, you are not such as they are,—and who shall hinder me, a free man, from linking my destiny with yours?"

"I weep not for myself," gently answered the maid; "but for you, do I mourn, my beloved—that your dream upon earth should have me for its object—and that woman's love, as the children of men cherish it, should never smile upon you.—My country!—look around and you see it. My crystal castle is cool and lovely. My power is greater than yours. My father is not inferior to yours; but no mother have I; and my faith is not your faith."

"Not my faith?" cried the knight, startled,—
"tell me, do you not believe in God, our Creator?"

The maid smiled, as she murmured softly, "We all believe in one God."

"And do you not believe," continued the knight, "in Jesus Christ, our Lord, who died for us on the cross?"

"For thee, but not for me," was her answer. "Yet, why are you horror-stricken, my beloved? Do you suppose that this beauteous world was given to the weak, proud worms of humanity alone? and that they only have a right, or that there is room for them alone, in the mansions of our God? Tremble not, Conrad; I am no evil spirit; I am the nymph of this fountain, coeval with the world,

and shall live to its term, ministering in silence to the benefit of you mortals. I extinguish, in the depths of the earth, the fiery streams of our mutual enemies the salamanders, that they may not consume your meadows and destroy your harvests. I water your fields with streamlets, refresh the travellers, and, deep beneath you, prepare those medicinal waters that restore the sick. I am gifted beyond you; for, when you grow old, and your gray head sinks into the grave, I bloom in youthful beauty, as I have done for many thousand years. But love is felt by all on earth; against it, neither station nor pride is a safeguard; and the form of the daughters of Eve having been given to me, this hidden fire has been burning within me since I first saw you. It was the will of fate that we should meet; and all that live in time and space must bend to destiny. You are now free; you are yet unfettered, and may return home, take to yourself a loving wife, formed of mortal clay, who, passing with you the dream of life, will with you wake again, never more to separate. Me will you have lost—me you never will see more. When your spirit leaves its mortal frame it will pass beyond the skies, but *I* must remain here. There is yet time—you may still change; break my heart, and be happy here, as men are happy;—when once I have clasped you in my arms, you are mine till death!”

As the nymph concluded, she sank into the

fountain, whilst the knight returned, sad and thoughtful, to his castle; for the words of his un-earthly love had gone like daggers to his heart.

In vain he tried to conquer his dangerous attachment, as during many days he kept from the scene of his adventure. At length he found it would be impossible to support life without the nymph; and he therefore again rode forth, impatient to receive the reward of his love in the smiles of the beautiful maid.

She was seated in sadness at the fountain; and, on seeing the knight, regarded him with a mournful look, and sighing deeply, murmured—"Long have I waited for you in silent sorrow—I thought you were lost to me for ever." The knight approached her with a grave demeanour—swore faithful love to her for the remainder of his life; and she pressed him to her breast. There, where they rested at the fountain, under the lofty oaks, sprang up that blue, tender floweret, the emblem of constancy, with wild thyme and other sweet-scenting flowers.

The year passed, and the long winter, covering field, stream, and fountain, with its frost and snow, kept the nymph confined to her palace in the depths of the earth, and the knight to his solitary castle, pining in mixed anxiety and impatience; but, on the return of spring, when the trees budded afresh, the life of mysterious happy love recommenced.

It was a matter of indifference to the knight that, as he advanced in years, he passed in the neighbourhood more and more for an extraordi-

nary being and an anchorite; nay, that it was even occasionally whispered that he had made a compact with the devil, to whose infernal revels he daily issued forth to return home after midnight. In vain Father Cyprian addressed himself to his conscience — vain were the pious warnings given him, far and near, to extricate himself from his diabolical, or, at best, mysterious connexions; — it was no longer in his power to tear himself from his sweet bonds; and his long life passed like a pleasing dream.

When, old and weak, he perceived that his last hour was approaching, he rode out to take a last sad farewell of his heart's dearest; who, in the unchanging bloom of youth, awaited in tears his arrival at the fountain.

"All is at an end!" spake the knight, now grown gray, and with a bent head,—"here must we part. I am summoned where I am never to meet you,—adieu, my beloved! —forget me not!"

"*I* forget you!" mournfully sighed the nymph, "you, who have devoted your life to me! you, whom no one will now meet to be your companion in the dreary paths of eternity! Never can I forget you! Tell me, Oh, dear one! what I am to do in memory of you, and as a testimony to future generations of the affection that united us.

"Alas!" replied the knight, "I have abandoned my holy calling, and, for your love, neglected my duties of tending the sick. That God may shew mercy to and pardon me, replace me, endow

these waters with the power to comfort, refresh, and cure poor sufferers; and let this fountain, where I have dreamed away my life with you, be called to distant ages 'The Fountain of St. Lazarus,' in honour of the patron of my order."

"What you have asked is granted," answered the nymph, with a pensive smile; "this fountain shall be a blessing to the children of men. My tears for you, dear and faithful one! shall be mingled with its waters. In future ages, when my bitter pangs for your loss, which will long, long, make me hate the face of day, shall have been assuaged by time, solitary and melancholy I may perhaps occasionally emerge from the earth's centre, and revisit this spot, rendered sacred by the memory of our affections. Adieu, my beloved! all is now over!—never shall we meet again!"

As the knight parted from life, softly and without pain, in his castle, a cool vapour was observed to float through the apartments, with a fragrance as of lilies and violets.

The memory of the knight has passed away, and the Bolzenburg itself is a ruin. The forest has been cleared along the banks of the river, and the little town of Grünan built; where a spring, famed far and near for its medicinal virtues, is called the 'Fountain of St. Lazarus' to this day.

Here the nymph has been occasionally seen, weeping bitterly, and looking into the fountain, as though in search of something that she had lost.

THE SISTERS.

BY THE COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON.

MATILDA.

READ not so fast, dear sister ; pause awhile,
For I would hear thy thoughts of her who left
Her home, her duty, and the friends she loved,
To follow one unworthy.

LOUISA.

She was meant
For good, and had she known a friend like thee,
To whisper a fond warning in her ear,
She ne'er had left her calm and happy home,
Where her bright presence shed a sunshine round.
I blame, yet pity too ; when punishment
Treads on the heels of error, I forget
The crime in mourning for the coming wo.
Is it not so with thee ?

MATILDA.

It is *not* so.
I pity, but—remember. She who leaves
An arrow in the loving mother's heart,
And dyes with the red blush of burning shame
The father's forehead and the brother's cheek,—

LOUISA.

Deserves not pity ! Yet I weep for her ;
For I behold her pining for her home,



Engraved by J. Mayner

Praying once more to rest her aching brow
On that maternal breast which pillowed it
In happy childhood, ere one sinful thought
Had quickened its pulsations.

MATILDA.

Think'st thou not
Of those she left in sorrow, bowed with shame,
For *her* who loosened every natural tie?—
Remember, though she brought despair to all,
She thought not, cared not, till her lover grew
Indifferent, cold : 'twas *then* that fearfully
The recollection of her happier hours
Rushed on her dreams, and she awoke a wretch,
Whose days and nights were steeped in bitterness !

LOUISA.

Yet she lived on ?

MATILDA.

'Tis true she did not die—
Till many weary months had gloomed away ;
For sorrow kills not quickly. Well,—she lived ;
Yes, lived to know her mother's heart was broke ;
To hear harsh curses from her father's tongue !
Then lay she down upon her bed—and died,
A hireling's care,—and prey !

LOUISA.

And where was *he*,
The lover, the destroyer ? where was *he* ?

MATILDA.

Fled ! 'twas a summer love ; the *first* wild cloud
(Sorrow or sickness) swept its bloom away.
He watched impatiently from day to day
The paleness dawning on her altered cheek ;
And her remorse ev'n angered him. Her lips
Never reproached him, but the bursting tears
She could not quell, had tongues more loud than
words ;
And when she greeted him no more with smiles,
He who had chased them—left her to her grief—
Thus, drinking up her cup of bitterness,
She lived, and loved, and—died !

LOUISA.

Alas, poor girl !
She sinned — and suffered, loved—and died, you
say.
'Twas some atonement. I believe there dwells
Immortal mercy in the azure sky,
Too vast to let her suffer any more.
Now she is *dead*, and thus hath paid her debt,
God will forgive her, for she prayed to him
With a most contrite heart ; methinks I see
Her soaring (once more stainless) to the stars,
An angel, not unerring, but redeemed ;
Welcomed by angels. Now once more she lies
Upon her mother's heart, and once more wears
The sunny look of spotless infancy.

STANZAS WRITTEN AT SYDENHAM,

BY THE LADY CHARLOTTE BURY.

ONE day of lustrous brightness heaven displays,
 The parting guerdon of the parting year,
 But languidly with pensive eyes I gaze,
 In darkling mood befitting autumn sere ;
 Yet not with thankless heart to mercy blind,
 Grateful though sad—though sorrowing yet re-
 sign'd.

What though this sylvan scene to me is tame,
 Unlike my native mountains' majesty—
 Nature is beauteous still ; for still, the same
 Creator's glory shines on all I see,
 And ever claims the homage she inspires—
 Dwells she in pomp, or in low mead retires.

The formal moulding of the cultured fields,
 Arrayed now in party-coloured tire,
 The yellow glebe, which scanty pittance yields
 To humble gleaner, or the feather'd quire,
 While spots of verdure brightly intervene,
 Like light of smiles the dark dun earths between.

Th' enclosing hedge-rows, with their dusky elm,
Which to th' unthinking mar the prospect bland,
Convey some serious thoughts, that overwhelm
My schooled mind with language of command—
“ In thy brow's sweat alone shalt thou eat bread,
Else thorns and thistles rise in fruitage stead.”

Yet, softened now by Mercy's meek behest,
The awful mandate is more lightly borne ;
Pleas'd with his work, man sees his pastures drest,
Renews his labour, and forgets to mourn.
Toil sweetens pleasure—pleasure sweetens toil :
Such is the alternate doom of this world's coil.

The fair rich landscape widely far outspread,
The gentle undulation of the earth,
The hamlets, houses, thereon scattered,
Of wealth and commerce the prolific birth,
And distant city's motley proud domain,
Display increasing greatness o'er the plain.

There, wrapp'd in smoke of many-tinted wreath,
Yet not ungrateful in the obscurity,
Th' apostle's dome is dimly seen beneath,*
And Henry's fane of solemn majesty.
There brave, and learned, and great, together sleep,
And silent death mocks those who live and weep.

* St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey, seen from the top of Sydenham Common.

For there the crowd, on busy, bustling wing,
Consume the allotted portion of their life
In thoughtless thought, in solemn trifling,
In vain ambition, and in futile strife.
There, gross of soul to worldly greatness rise—
There, subtler spirit sickens, pines, and dies.

Hark ! through the still dense air the bells do ring,—
They come from distance with a softened sound :
Nor yet unpleasing is the murmuring
Of city's din when thus it doth rebound,
And fancy hangs a tongue in every bell,
Which mingled tales of joy and sorrow swell.

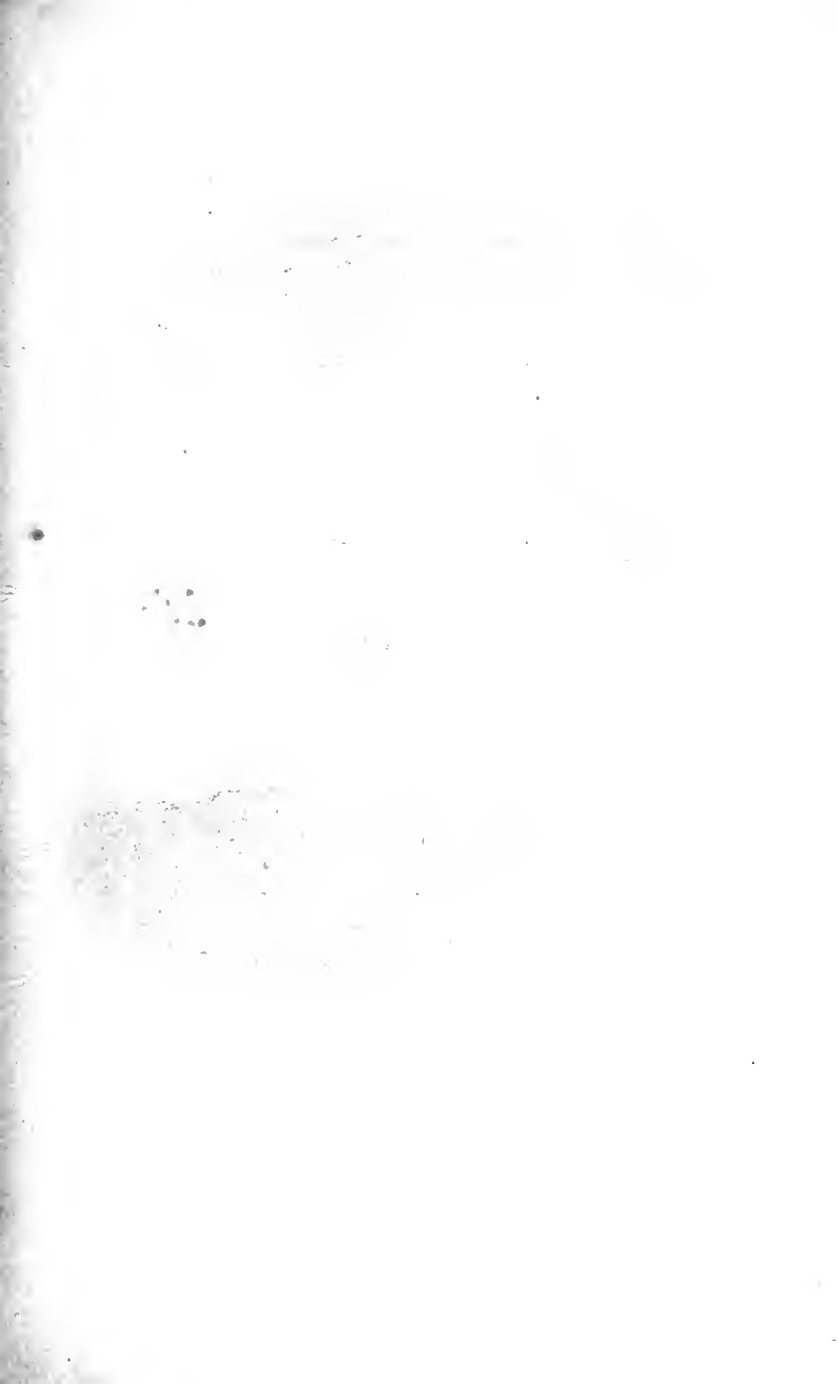
Man's joys and sorrows are so near allied,
The tomb is in the cradle's vicinage ;
So not unmeetly are these bells applied,
To greet his birth, or toll the fall of age.
On the same lyre, I know it by this token,
The heart is cheered, although the heart is broken.

'Tis true, and yet the rebel heart denies
To sign concession to its present bliss ;
And disavows that by-gone joy supplies
A Gilead balm, to heal its miseries.
The worn-out soul is sick with hope deferred—
One coming joy to all the past's preferred.

How many summer suns I've seen glide by,
How many wintry storms their course resume,

And never in my heart's fond treasury
Laid up one joy—the fruit of pleasure's bloom !
But many a faded blossom's been laid low :
In nature's realm it is not ordered so.

All this and more, with melancholy eye,
I mark—as, lonely on the upland straying,
My favourite path I seek with mystery,
And linger there with many a fond delaying,
Feeding sick fancy with a sickly fare,
And pining still in liveries of care.





THE ELDER SON,

BY MRS. SHELLEY.

My father was the second son of a wealthy baronet. As he and his elder brother formed all the family of my grandfather, he inherited the whole of his mother's fortune, which was considerable, and settled on the younger children. He married a lady whom he tenderly loved; and having taken orders, and procured preferment, retired to his deanery in the north of Ireland, and there took up his abode. When I was about ten years old he lost my mother: I was their only child.

My father was something of an ascetic, if such name can be given to a rigid adherence to the precepts of morality, which arose from the excess, and not the absence of feeling. He adored my mother; he mourned for her to the verge of insanity; but his grief was silent, devouring, and gloomy. He never formed another matrimonial engagement: secluding himself entirely from society, and given up to the duties of his sacred calling, he passed his days in solitude, or in works of charity among the poor.

Even now I cannot remember him without awe. He was a tall and, I thought, a venerable-looking

man ; for he was thin and pale, and he was partly bald. His manners were cold and reserved ; he seldom spoke, and when he did it was in such measured phrase, in so calm and solemn a voice, and on such serious topics, as resembled rather oracular enunciation than familiar conversation. He never caressed me ; if ever he stroked my head or drew me on his knee, I felt a mingled alarm and delight difficult to describe. Yet, strange to say, my father loved me almost to idolatry ; and I knew this and repaid his affection with enthusiastic fondness, notwithstanding his reserve and my awe. He was something greater, and wiser, and better, in my eyes, than any other human being. I was the sole creature he loved ; the object of all his thoughts by day and his dreams by night. Abstracted and even severe as he seemed, he has visited my bedside at night, subdued by womanly fears, and hung over me for hours, to assure himself of my life and well-being. He has watched by me in sickness night after night with unwearied assiduity. He never spoke harshly to me, and treated me at once with a distance and gentleness hard to be understood.

When I was eighteen he died. During his last illness the seal was taken from his lips, and his heart threw off that husk within which he had hitherto concealed its true nature. He died of a rapid consumption, which terminated his existence within six months of his being first taken ill. His body wasted

under the effects of mortal disease ; but his soul assumed new life and energy, and his temper became as soft and demonstrative as it had hitherto been repulsive and concentrated. He became my father, friend, and brother, all in one ; a thousand dear relationships combined in one stronger than any. This sudden melting, this divine sensibility, which expanded at once, having been so long shut up and hid, was like a miracle. It fascinated and entranced me. I could not believe that I was about to lose him at the moment when we discovered each other's worth : I mean by that expression, as regards myself, all the happiness that he derived from the truth and vivacity of my filial affection.

It were vain to attempt to refer even to our conversations : the sublime morality he inculcated ; the tenderness and charity of his expressions ; the overflowing and melting eloquence with which he talked of the affections of this world, and his aspirations after a better. He died suddenly at last, as I was playing to him a simple air my mother loved. It was a moment of horror, yet of solemn and pious resignation : his soul had sought its native heaven and congenial companion—might it be blest ! Yet I had lost him, and grief immeasurable was the result. The impression of the misery I suffered can never be entirely worn from my mind : I often wonder my heart did not break with the violence of my sorrow.

I had been brought up at the deanery, apart

from all acquaintances. I had had a governess, a most worthy woman, who married just before my father was taken ill, and who kindly came to me when all was over, to endeavour to console the inconsolable. One of my father's objects in life had been to accumulate a fortune for me; not for the sake of placing me in the dangerous situation of an heiress, but to render me independent. It thus happened, that by his ever-lamented death I inherited considerable wealth. His own fortune, my mother's, and his savings, formed the sum of fifty thousand pounds. He left me under the guardianship of his elder brother, Sir Richard Gray, with only one restriction, that I was not to marry, even with my uncle's consent, till I was twenty-one. He wished thus to secure me freedom of choice, and time for deliberation. To this sagacious clause I owe the happiness of my life.

As soon as my health and the first agony of my grief would permit, I left the deanery. My kind governess accompanied me to Dublin, and Sir Richard Gray came hither himself to fetch me, and to carry me to his seat in England. I was beyond measure surprised when I saw my uncle. He was a year older than my father—my venerable father—and he looked in comparison a boy. He was indeed under fifty, and had at first sight a juvenility of aspect quite astonishing. On examination, the traces of years and care became perceptible; and there was an haggardness in his face

which contrasted strangely with its expression of thoughtlessness. No one could be kinder than he was to me, and yet his very kindness was revolting, from the contrast he formed with my lost parent. The world, society, and pleasure, occupied his time and thoughts. Solitude and misery were synonymous terms with him; and he called every thing solitude that did not include the idea of a crowd. He rattled away during our journey, thinking his anecdotes and good stories would enliven me. He was so sorry that it was not the season that I could go to London—he would have invited his daughter, Lady Hythe, to his seat, that he might arrange a party to enliven it for me; but she was on the continent, and his other married daughter was resident in Scotland. What was to be done? He had engagements himself during the shooting season at various gentlemen's houses; and I should be moped to death at Beech Grove. This account of the seclusion of my retreat was all my comfort. I declared that nothing should induce me to go into society for several years. He stared, and then smiled, and in his usual caressing gallant manner said, I should do as I liked; he would never contradict me in any thing: he only hoped that he should be always able to please and gratify me.

My uncle's story is soon told. He married, very early in life, a girl of inferior rank. His relations were exceedingly enraged, and discarded him. His father died; and his grandfather, fearing that he

would sell his expectations and squander the whole property, offered him a large immediate income, upon condition that he would entail the estate upon his eldest son. He consented. A few years after, his grandfather died, and he came into the titles and estate. The new Lady Gray made herself many friends from the extreme propriety of her conduct. They had a large family, but lost many children; and she died in childbed of her youngest. Five only survived. The eldest son was abroad: two daughters were well married, and the youngest, a girl of only twelve years of age, lived with her governess at the family seat in Hampshire. Sir Richard talked kindly of his children, but chiefly of his eldest son, against whom therefore I conceived a prejudice; because, from his father's description, I considered him dissipated and worthless. Such, indeed, was my uncle; but I did not dislike him, for by the charm of manner he vanquished aversion, and I transferred to his favourite son the disapprobation he had at first excited. I was glad to hear that my cousin was at Vienna, and that I was not likely to see him.

We arrived at Beech Grove on the 29th August. It was a fine summer day, and the country in all its glory. The house was spacious and elegant, and situated in an extensive park, laid out with infinite taste, and kept up with extreme care. All looked so gay and smiling, so unlike the sombre scenes I had left on the shores of the dark northern

ocean, that I contemplated my new abode with distaste: such is the force of habit. My uncle had expected that I should be enchanted with the novel beauty of an English park and mansion, and was disappointed at my languid praise. There were no rocks, no sea, no extensive moors. Groves of beech, a river threading verdant wooded banks, a variety of upland and valley, glade and copse, did not command my admiration; so true it is that we seldom admire that which is absolutely new. A few months totally altered this first impression. The cheerfulness of the scene imperceptibly acted on my spirits. I became reconciled to its (to a certain degree) tameness, and learnt at last to love its refined and elegant beauty.

Sir Richard talked of visiting and company. He would have called his neighbours round us, and forced me to accept invitations at the various houses where, in the shooting season, were assembled large parties of the rich and gay. I earnestly assured him that my depressed spirits and deep-rooted sorrow needed tranquillity — that the seclusion which his house promised was its principal attraction — that I was most happy to be alone. He could not believe my assertions — it hurt his feelings to leave me in this desert: he actually delayed his departure for two days, not liking to quit me. At last he went; and speedily, in the pursuit of pleasure, forgot my existence.

I was not absolutely alone in his house; my

cousin Marianne inhabited it with me. She was a pretty, agreeable girl, of twelve years of age; and we got on very well together. I had recourse to her society when over-weary of thought; and she was so young that I could leave her, and betake myself to my mournful, lonely reveries, whenever I liked, without ceremony.

I had not been at Beech Grove more than a week, when late one afternoon, on returning from a drive, we distinguished lights in the dining-room. "Can it be my brother?" cried Marianne; "can Clinton have arrived!"

"I hope not," I said.

"O, do not say so," replied the little girl; "you would love Clinton; he is so lively and dear—every body loves him."

She scarce waited for the steps to be let down, but jumped from the carriage: she returned to me in a minute with an air of disappointment, "It is only my brother Vernon," she said.

"And you do not care about him?"

"O, yes," she replied, "Vernon is very good, and all that; but he is quite different from Clinton; he may stay a month in the house and I not see him twice."

The habit of solitude had rendered me a little bashful. I had dined early with my cousin, and the new-comer was at dinner. I went into the drawing-room therefore, and made her stay with me, and awaited his entrance with some alarm. He soon

joined us. As he entered, I was struck with his being the handsomest man I had ever seen. His complexion was a clear olive ; his eyes a dark blue ; his head small and well-shaped ; his figure scarcely above the middle size, but slender and elegant. I expected the courteous manners of my uncle to correspond with the grace of his appearance ; but Vernon had no vivacity, no softness. His words were pregnant with meaning, and his eyes flashed fire as he spoke ; but his address was abrupt, his conversation pointed and sarcastic, and a disagreeable ironical smile, in which he indulged, deteriorated greatly from his good looks. Still, he was very handsome, very clever, and very entertaining.

One part of Marianne's description at least was erroneous. He spent every day and all day with us. He rode or walked with us in the morning ; read to us in the evening ; conversed as we worked or painted ; and did all that a person most sedulous to please could do, except turning over the leaves of our music-books. He did not like music—of which my father was so passionately fond—in all else his tastes seemed mine. He gave me Italian lessons ; and, except when I drove him away, was never absent from our side. Marianne declared that her brother Vernon was an altered man. I thought that I knew whence the alteration sprung.

What girl of eighteen, just emerged from solitude, could perceive the birth of love in the heart of a young, accomplished, and handsome man, and

not feel her vanity gratified? My peculiar education had prevented my having any of the coquettishness of beauty or the insolence of wealth. I own I felt elated. I became of consequence in my own eyes; and my silly heart swelled with conscious triumph. Vernon grew each day more openly devoted to me, more solicitous to please, more flattering and attentive. He advanced with imperceptible steps to the desired bourne, and no impatience of temper disturbed for a moment his progress. Stealthy as a serpent, and as wily, he became necessary to my comfort; and I had compromised myself by displaying my vain triumph in my conquest, before he betrayed himself by a word.

When I found that he sought a return for his love, I was frightened. I discovered that with all his talents and agreeable qualities I scarcely liked him; and certainly could never feel a sentiment more tender than friendship. I reproached myself for my ingratitude—I felt ashamed of my vacillation. He saw my struggles—he was all humility—he did not deserve better—he was satisfied if I would only be a sister to him—pity him—endure his presence. I agreed, and reassumed my familiarity and good humour.

It is impossible to describe his refined artifice, or the wonderful assiduity with which he watched by his concealed net till I was completely immeshed. He contrived first that I should consent to listen to him talking of his passion;—then he excited my pity

for his sufferings—he was eloquent in describing them and in exalting my merits. He asked for so little, he seemed so humble—but he was importunate, and never gave up the smallest advantage he had once gained. Forgotten by my uncle, unknown and unregarded by the rest of the world, I was delivered over to his machinations. Day after day he renewed them. He discerned and worked upon every weakness of my character. My fear to do wrong; my alarm at the idea of being the occasion of pain; my desire to preserve my integrity without a flaw—these might be termed virtues; but, distorted and exaggerated by natural conceit and youthful inexperience, they rendered me a too easy prey. At last he extracted from me a promise to marry him when I should be of age. This pledge seemed the only method left me to prove my delicacy and truth. I gave it the more readily because I admired his talents, and believed that he deserved a better wife than I, and that my want of love was a fault in me for which I ought to compensate to him. With all the rashness and inexperience of my age, I confess that I even tried to conceal my latent aversion; so that when, after having obtained my promise, he went away for a week, I willingly assented to his request that I should correspond with him, and my letters were full of affection. I found it easier to write than speak what I did not really feel, and was glad to shew my gratitude and my sense of his attachment at an easy rate.

At the same time, I consented to keep our engagement secret, that thus I might have an excuse for preserving the reserve of my conduct. I took advantage of this wish on his part to insist on his leaving me for a time. I was glad when he went, yet mortified at the readiness of his obedience.

I must not be unjust. Vernon had many faults, but coldness of feeling was not among them. Vehemence and passion were his characteristics, though he could unite them to a deliberation in design, and a willness in execution, without example. He had determined before he saw me to win me and my fortune; but such was the violence of his disposition, that he was unavoidably caught in his own toils; and the project that was founded on self-interest ended in making him the slave of love — of a girl whom he despised. He went when I bade him eagerly; but he fulfilled his aim better by so doing. My letters were to be confirmations strong against me — in case that hereafter, as he too justly feared, I should wish to retract my vows. I heedlessly accomplished his ends, beyond his most sanguine expectations. My letters were those of a betrothed bride; and what they might want in tenderness was made up by their uncompromising acknowledgment of our relative position. Having obtained these testimonies, he returned. I was not sorry. I was too little pleased with myself to be in love with solitude. His presence kept alive the feeling of irresistible

fate to which I had yielded; and his society enlivened the monotonous quiet of Beech Grove.

At length Christmas came, and my uncle returned and filled his house with visitors. Then the darker shades of Vernon's character became apparent. He was as jealous as an Italian. His disposition was sombre and averse to sociable pleasures. God knows grief sat too heavy at my heart to allow me to be very vivacious; still, I wished to please my uncle, and thought that I had no right to cloud the good humour of the company; and added to this was the elastic spirit of youth, which sprung eagerly and spontaneously from the gloom and mystery of Vernon's artifices into the more congenial atmosphere of friendly intercourse. He saw me unlike anything he had ever seen in me before—sprightly, and ready to share the amusement of the hour. He groaned in bitterness of spirit. He reproached—reprehended—and became a very task-master. I was naturally timid and docile—in vain did my spirit revolt from his injustice: he gained and kept complete ascendancy over me. Yet my soul was in arms against him even while I submitted to his control, and dislike began to develope itself in my bosom. I tasked myself severely for my ingratitude. I became in appearance kinder than ever; but every internal struggle and every outward demonstration had unfortunately one result—to alienate my affections more and more from my lover-cousin.

Our guests left us. My uncle went up to town.

He told me he hoped I would accompany him there as soon as Lady Hythe returned to chaperon me. But I was more averse than ever to visiting London. Bound to Vernon by my promises, and wishing to keep my faith with him, I did not like to expose myself to the temptation of seeing others I should like better. Besides, the memory of my father was still unfaded, and I resolved not to appear in public till the year of mourning was expired. Vernon accompanied his father to town, but returned again to us almost immediately. We appeared to revert to our former mode of life; but the essence of it was changed. He was moody.—I anxious. I almost ventured to accuse him of ill-temper and tyranny, till, reading in my own heart its indifference, I was inclined to consider myself the cause of his discontent. I tried to restore his complacency by kindness, and in some degree succeeded.

One day Sir Richard suddenly appeared at Beech Grove. He seemed surprised to find Vernon, and care and even anxiety clouded his usual hilarity. He told us that he expected Clinton daily, and should, immediately on his arrival, bring him down to Hampshire.

“To celebrate my birth-day?” asked Vernon, with a sardonic smile; “I am of age on Friday.”

“No,” said his father; “he will not be here so soon.”

“Nor I so honoured,” said Vernon; “Clinton’s

coming of age was celebrated by tumultuous rejoicings ; but he is the Elder Son."

Sir Richard gave Vernon, who spoke sneeringly, a quick glance—an indescribable expression of pain crossed his countenance.

"Have you been staying here since Christmas?" he asked at last. Vernon would have replied evasively, but Marianne said :

"O yes ! he is always here now."

"You appear to have become very fond of Beech Grove of a sudden," continued his father. I felt that Sir Richard's eye was fixed on me as he spoke, and I was conscious that not only my cheeks, but my temples and neck were crimsoned with blushes. Some time after I saw my uncle in the shrubbery ; he was alone, and the want of society was always so painful to him, that I thought it but a mark of duteous kindness to join him. I wondered, as I approached, to see every token of haggard care on a face usually so smiling. He saw me, and smoothed his brow ; he began talking of London, of my elder cousin, of his desire that I should conquer my timidity, and consent to be presented this spring. At length he suddenly stopped short, and scrutinising me as he spoke, said :

"Pardon me, dear Ellen, if I annoy you ; but I am your guardian, your second father—am I not ? Do not be angry, therefore, if I ask you, are you attached to my son Vernon ?"

My natural frankness prompted one reply, but

a thousand feelings, inexplicable but powerful, hung on my tongue. I answered, stammering: "No—I believe so—I like him."

"But you do not love him?"

"What a question, dear uncle!" I replied, covered with confusion.

"Is it even so?" cried Sir Richard; "and is he to succeed in all?"

"You mistake," I said; for I had an horror of confessing an attachment which, after all, I did not feel, and so of making our engagement more binding. But I blushed deeply as I spoke, and my uncle looked incredulous and said:

"Yet it would make you very unhappy if he married another."

"O, no!" I cried, "he has my free leave. I should wish him joy with all my heart."

The idea—the hope that he was playing me false, and might release me from my trammels, darted through my mind with a quick thrill of delight. Sir Richard saw that I was in earnest, and his countenance cleared.

"What a strange thing is maiden coyness," he observed; "you blushed so prettily, Ellen, that I could have sworn you had given your heart to Vernon. But I see I was mistaken; I am glad of it, for he would not suit you."

No more was said, but I felt conscience-stricken and miserable. I had deceived my uncle, and yet I had not. I had declared that I did not love him to

whom I had pledged my hand ; and the whole was a mystery and an entanglement that degraded me in my own eyes. I longed to make a full confession ; yet then all would be over—we should both be inextricably bound. As it was, some caprice might cause Vernon to transfer his affection to another, and I could give him entire freedom, without any human being knowing how foolishly I had acted.

We had no guests at dinner ; Sir Richard was to leave us early the next morning. After dinner I speedily retired to the drawing-room, leaving father and son together ; they remained two hours. I was on the point of withdrawing to my own room, to avoid a meeting which alarmed me, I knew not why, when they entered. It seemed as if, in the interval of my absence, they had received sudden intelligence of a dear friend's death ; and yet not quite so, for though Vernon looked absorbed in thought, his gloom was strangely interspersed with glances of swelling triumph ; his smiles were no longer sneers—yet they did not betray a sunshine of the heart, but rather joy on a bad victory. He looked on me askance, with a kind of greedy satisfaction, and at his father with scorn. I trembled, and turned to my uncle ; but sadness and confusion marked his features—he was stamped as with disgrace, and quailed beneath my eye ; though presently he rallied, drew a chair near, and was kinder than ever. He told me that he was going up to town on the morrow, and that Vernon was to accompany him ; he asked me if there was any

thing he could do for me, and testified his affection by a thousand little attentions. Vernon said nothing, and took leave of me so coldly, that I thought his manner implied that he expected to see me in the morning. Thinking it right to indulge him, I rose early; but he did not come down till long after Sir Richard, who thanked me for my kindness in disturbing myself on his account. They went away immediately after breakfast, and Vernon's formal adieu again struck me with wonder. Was it possible that he was indeed going to marry another? This doubt was all my comfort, for I was painfully agitated by the false position in which I had entangled myself, by the mystery that enveloped my actions, and the falsehood which my lips perpetually implied, if they did not utter.

I was habitually an early riser. On the third morning after the departure of my relations, before I rose, and while I was dressing, I thought that pebbles were thrown at my window; but my mind was too engrossed to pay attention, till at last, after my toilette had been leisurely completed, I looked from my window, and saw Vernon below, in the secluded part of the park which it overlooked. I hurried down, my heart palpitating with anxiety.

"I have been waiting for you these two hours," he said, angrily: "did you not hear my signal?"

"I know of no signal," I replied; "I am not accustomed to clandestine appointments."

"And yet you can carry on a clandestine en-

gagement excellently well! You told Sir Richard that you did not love me—that you should be glad if I married another.”

An indignant reply was bursting from my lips, but he saw the rising storm and hastened to allay it. He changed his tone at once from reproach to tender protestations.

“It broke my heart to leave you as I did,” he said, “but I could do no less. Sir Richard insisted on my accompanying him—I was obliged to comply. Even now he believes me to be in town. I have travelled all night. He half suspected me, because I refused to dine with him to-day; and I was forced to promise to join him at a ball to-night. I need not be there till twelve or one, and so can stay two hours with you.”

“But why this hurried journey?” I asked. “Why do you come?”

He answered by pleading the vehemence of his affection, and spoke of the risk he ran of losing me for ever. “Do you not know,” he said, “that my father has set his heart upon your marrying my brother?”

“He is very good,” I replied, disdainfully. “But I am not a slave, to be bought and sold. My cousin Clinton is the last person in the world whom you need fear.”

“Oh, Ellen, how much do you comfort—transport me, by this generous contempt for wealth and rank! You ask why I am here—it were worth the fatigue,

twice ten thousand times told, to have these assurances. I have trembled—I have feared—but you will not love this favoured of fortune—this elder son !”

I cannot describe Vernon’s look as he said this. Methought envy, malice, and demoniac exultation were all mingled. He laughed aloud—I shrunk from him dismayed. He became calmer a moment after.

“ My life is in your hands, Ellen,” he said ;—but why repeat his glossing speeches, in which deceit and truth were so kneaded into one mass, that the poison took the guise of the wholesome substance, while the whole was impregnated with destruction. I felt that I liked him less than ever ; yet I yielded to his violence. I believed myself the victim of a venial but irreparable mistake of my own. I confirmed my promises, and pledged my faith most solemnly. It is true that I undeceived him as much as I could with regard to the extent of my attachment ; at first he was furious at my coldness, then overwhelmed me with entreaties for forgiveness—tears even streamed from his eyes—and then again he haughtily reminded me that I forfeited every virtue of my sex, and became a monument of falsehood, if I failed him. We separated at last—I promised to write every day, and saw him ride away with a sensation as if relieved from the infliction of the torture.

A week after this scene—my spirits still de-

pressed, and often weeping my dear father's death, which I considered the root of every evil—I was reading, or rather trying to read, in my dressing-room, but in reality brooding over my sorrows, when I heard Marianne's cheerful laugh in the shrubbery, and her voice calling me to join her. I roused myself from my sad reverie, and resolved to cast aside care and misery, while Vernon's absence afforded me a shadow of freedom; and, in fulfilment of this determination, went down to join my young light-hearted cousin. She was not alone. Clinton was with her. There was no resemblance between him and Vernon. His countenance was all sunshine; his light-blue eyes laughed in their own gladness and purity; his beaming smile, his silver-toned voice, his tall manly figure, and, above all, his open-hearted engaging manners, were all the reverse of his dark mysterious brother. I saw him, and felt that my prejudices had been ridiculous; we became intimate in a moment. I know not how it was, but we seemed like brother and sister—each feeling, each thought, being laid bare to the other. I was naturally frank, but rendered timid by education; so that it charmed me doubly when the unreserve of another invited me to indulge in the unguarded confidence of my disposition. How speedily the days now flew! they contained but one drawback, my correspondence with my cousin—not that I felt myself unfaithful towards him; my affection for my new-found relation did not disturb my

conscience—that was pure, undisguised, sisterly. We had met from across the ocean of life—two beings who formed an harmonised whole; but the sympathy was too perfect, too untinged by earthly dross, to be compared with the selfish love given and exacted by Vernon. Yet I feared that his jealousy might be awakened, while I felt less inclined than ever to belie my own heart; and with aversion and hesitation penned letters containing the formula of affection and engaged vows.

Sir Richard came down to Beech Grove. He was highly pleased to see the cordial friendship that subsisted between his son and me.

“Did I not tell you that you would like him?” he said. “Every one must,” I replied, “he is formed to win all hearts.”

“And suits you much better than Vernon?”

I did not know what to answer; it was a tender string that he touched; but I resolved not to feel or think. Sir Richard’s were all flying visits; he was to leave us in the evening. He had, during the morning, a long conversation with Clinton; and immediately after, he sought for an opportunity to talk to me.

“Ellen,” he said, “I have not been a wise but I am a fond father. I have done Clinton many injuries, of which he, poor fellow, is wholly unconscious; and I have wished to compensate for all in giving him a wife worthy of him. His temper is generous; his spirit clear and noble. By my

soul, I think he has every virtue under heaven ; and you alone deserve him. Do not interrupt me, I beseech you ; hear me this once. I confess that ever since you became my ward this has been my favourite project. There have been several obstacles ; but the most serious ones seem to vanish. You have seen each other, and I flatter myself have each discovered and appreciated the good qualities of the other. Is it so, Ellen ? I know not whence my fears arise, and yet they intrude themselves. I fear, while I have been endeavouring to secure my boy's happiness, I may have been adding to the ruin already heaped on his head by my means. I have talked with him to-day. He has no disguise in his nature, and he avows that he loves you. I know that this confession would come better from himself ; but your fortune, your beauty, make him fear to be misinterpreted. Do not mistake—he is wholly unaware of my intention of speaking to you. I see your distress, dear Ellen ; have patience but for one word more—do not trifle with Clinton's feelings, as sometimes—forgive me—it has appeared to me that you have trifled with Vernon's—do not foster hopes not to be fulfilled. Be frank, be honest, despite the bashfulness and coquetry of your sex."

After these words, fearful of having offended—overcome by more agitation than I could have imagined him capable of feeling—my uncle drew me towards him, pressed me convulsively to his bosom, and then rushed from the room.

I cannot describe the state in which he left me—a spasm of pain passed through my frame ; I became sick and faint, till a flood of tears relieved my bursting heart. I wept long—I sobbed in agony—I felt the veriest wretch that ever trod the earth.

My uncle had rent the veil that concealed me from myself. I loved Clinton—he was the whole world to me—all the world of light and joy, and I had shut myself out from him for ever. And he also was my victim. I beheld his dear face beaming with hope ; I heard his thrilling voice harmonised by love ; and saw the fearless cordiality of his manners, which bespoke his confidence in my sympathy ; while I knew that I held a poisoned dagger which I was about to plunge into his heart. Sometimes I thought to treat him coldly ; sometimes—oh ! I cannot tell the various imaginations that haunted me—some self-sacrificing, others wicked and false—all ended in one way. My uncle departed ; we were left together, our full hearts beating to respond to each other without any division or reserve. I felt that every moment might cause Clinton to open his soul to me, and to seek in mine for a feeling too truly and too fondly alive there, but which was sinful and fatal to both. To prevent his confession, my own preceded it. I revealed to him my engagement to Vernon, and declared my resolve not to swerve from my faith. He commended me. I saw despair at losing me painted in his countenance, mingled with horror at

supplanting his brother; and alarm that he, the elder born, gifted by fortune with every blessing, should be suspected of the intention of stealing the sole remaining good, which Vernon had won by his diligence, perhaps by his deserts. Forbid it, Heaven! I saw in the clear mirror of his expressive countenance the struggle of passion and principle, and the triumph of honour and virtue exalted over the truest love that ever warmed man's breast.

Our gaiety was flown; our laughter stilled. We talked sadly and seriously together, neither lamenting our fate nor acknowledging our sufferings; tamed to endurance, and consoling each other by such demonstrations of affection as were permitted to our near relationship. We read clearly in each other's hearts, and supported each other in the joint sacrifice; and this without any direct acknowledgment. Clinton talked of returning to the continent; I of my seclusion and tranquillity at Beech Grove. The time was distant—two years was an eternity at our age—before Vernon could claim my hand; and we did not advert to that fatal consummation. We gave up each other; and that single misery sufficed without a more cruel addition. I was calm, pale, and tearless. I had brought it all on myself, and must submit. I could not cast aside the younger son to select the elder; and if in my secret thoughts I cherished a hope to induce Vernon to forego his claims, that very circumstance would the more entirely divide me from

Clinton. As my brother-in-law, I might see him—in some sort, our fortunes were shared; but as a rival to Vernon, a stream of blood separated us for ever.

The hours of sad sympathy which we passed were very dear to us. We knew that they were brief. Clinton had fixed the day and hour of his departure—each moment it drew nearer. We should never meet again till after my marriage; but till the hour of separation, for two short days, we were all in all to each other, despite the wall of adamant which was raised between us. We tried each to pretend to think and talk of indifferent subjects; and we *never* spoke of that nearest our hearts;—but how superfluous are words as interpreters between lovers! As we walked or rode, and spent hours in each other's society, we exchanged thoughts more intimately during long periods of absolute silence, than Vernon with his vehemence and eloquence could have conceived. Had we spoken folio volumes, we could have said no more. Our looks—the very casting down of our eyes and mutual tacit avoidance, told our resolve to fulfil our duties and to conquer our love; and yet how, by a glance or a faltering word, when the future was alluded to, did we promise never to forget, but to cherish mutual esteem and tenderness as all that was left of the paradise from which we were so ruthlessly driven! Now and then a playful expression on his part, or a blush on mine, betrayed

more feeling than we considered right; the one was checked by a sigh, the other by an assumption of indifference.

It was at this time that Clinton made the sketch copied in the portrait accompanying this tale. I had been spending many hours in tears and anguish, when, resolved to overcome my weakness, and to recover an appearance of serenity before my cousin returned from his ride, I went into Marianne's school-room, and took up a book. The exhaustion of weeping had calmed me; and I thought of my kinsman—his endearing qualities, and of the tie between us, with softened feelings. As I indulged in reverie, my head resting on my hand, my book falling from my fingers, my eyes closed; and I passed from the agitated sense of life and sorrow into the balmy forgetfulness of sleep. Clinton had wished to make a portrait of me, yet had not ventured to ask me to sit—he came in at this moment; Marianne, whispering, told him not to disturb me. He took her drawing materials, and made a hasty sketch, which genius and love united to render a perfect likeness. I awoke and saw his work; it was beyond our contract; I asked him for it; he felt that I was right, and gave it. This sacrifice on his part proved that he did not palter with his sense of right. On the morrow we were to part; and he would preserve no memorial beyond a remembrance which he could not destroy.

That morrow came. Clinton asked me and his

sister to walk through the park with him, to join his chariot at the further lodge. We consented; but, at the moment of going, Marianne, who knew nothing certainly, but who darkly guessed that all was not right, excused herself. I joined him alone. There was something in his person and manner that so promised protection and tenderness, that I felt it doubly hard to be torn from him. A dignified reserve, foreign to his usual nature, founded on a resolve to play only the brother's part, checked me somewhat; yet I loved him the more for it; while I would have laid down my existence so that it had only been permitted us to throw aside the mask but for one short hour, and to use the language of nature and truth. It could not be; and our conversation was upon indifferent subjects. When we approached the lodge, we found that the chariot had not come, and we retreated a little, and sat down on a turfy bank; then Clinton said a few words, the only ones that at all revealed the agitation he was enduring:—

“I have a little more experience than you, Ellen,” he said; “and, besides, I am haunted by strange presentiments; we seem to know what we ought to do, and what we are to do, and act accordingly—yet life is a strange, wild thing. I wish to insure for you a friend more willing and active than Sir Richard. I have a sister to whom I am fondly attached; she is now on the continent, but I shall hasten to her, and entreat her to afford

you a friendship you so richly deserve. You will love Lady Hythe for her own sake as well as for mine."

I was desirous of thanking him for this mark of kindness, but my voice failed me, and I burst into tears, overcome by the excess of anguish that deluged my heart. I tried to conceal my tears—I could not.

"Do not, Ellen, dear Ellen, I beseech you—command yourself."

Clinton spoke in a voice so broken, so full of misery, that he inspired me at once with fear and courage. The tread of a horse roused us—a horse at swift gallop. I raised my eyes, and uttered a shriek; for, reining in the animal with a sudden strong pull, Vernon halted close to us. The most violent passions convulsed his countenance. He threw himself from the horse, and, casting the bridle from him, came up. What he meant to say or do I cannot tell; perhaps to conceal the workings of his heart—and the quick departure of Clinton would have smoothed all; but I saw the barrel of a pistol peep from the pocket of his coat. I was seized with terror—I shrieked aloud. Clinton, terrified at my alarm, would have supported me, but Vernon pushed him rudely away.

"Dare not to approach or touch her, as you value your life!" he cried.

"My life! you talk idly, Vernon. I value her security—one moment of peace to her—far more."

“ You confess it ! ” exclaimed Vernon ; “ and you, too, false and treacherous girl ! Ha ! did you think to betray me, and be unpunished ? Do you think, if I so chose it, that I would not force you to look on till the blood of one of the brothers flowed at your feet ? But there are other punishments in store for you.”

The expressions of menace used towards myself restored my courage, and I exclaimed—“ Beware that you do not break the tie that binds us—at least that bound us a moment ago—perhaps it is already broken.”

“ Doubtless,” he cried, grinding his teeth with rage, “ it is broken, and a new one created to bind you to the elder son. O, yes ! you would fain cast aside the poor miserable beggar, who has vainly fawned on you, and madly loved—you would take the rich, the honourable, and honoured Sir Clinton ! Base, hollow-hearted fool ! ”

“ Vernon,” said Clinton, “ whatever your claims are on our cousin, I cannot stand by and see her insulted. You forget yourself.”

“ The forgetfulness, sir, is on your part ; proud in your seniority, to rival your brother, to drive him from his all, has been a May-game for you ; but know, proud fool, or villain—take which name you will—your hour is passed by—your reign at an end ! Your station is a fiction, your very existence a disgrace ! ”

Clinton and I both began to think that Vernon

was really mad—a suspicion confirmed by his violent gestures. We looked at each other in alarm.

“Stay!” exclaimed the infuriated man, seizing my arm with a fierce grasp; while, fearful to induce Clinton’s interference, I yielded. “Stay, and listen to what your lover is—or shall I wound your delicate ears? There are soft phrases and silken words to adorn that refuse of the world—a bastard!”

“Vernon, dare not!—beware, sir, and begone!”

Clinton’s face crimsoned; his voice, his majestic indignation almost forced the ruffian to quail; he threw my arm from him.

“Take him, fair Ellen! it is true you take what I say—a natural son. Do you think that my information is not correct? Ask our father, for he is yours, Clinton, and our mother is the same; you are the first-born of Richard Gray and Matilda Towers; but I am the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Gray.”

It could not have been that Vernon would have acted this cowardly and foolish part had he not been driven by a kind of madness. In truth, Sir Richard had, to quench his hopes for ever, with that carelessness of truth—his fatal propensity—affirmed that Clinton and I were acknowledged lovers; and he came goaded by worse than jealousy—by a spirit of hatred and revenge. Seeing us together, obviously engaged by the most engrossing feelings, his temper, which had been worked

into fury during his journey, burst forth beyond the bounds he had prescribed for himself. I have called him a serpent, and such he was in every respect; he could crawl and coil, and hide his wily advance; but he could erect his crest, dart out his forked tongue, and infix the deadly venom, when roused as he now was. Clinton turned alternately pale and red.

"Be it as you will," he said: "my fortunes and yours are of slight moment in comparison to Ellen's safety. If there is any truth in this tale of yours, there will be time enough to discover it and to act upon it. Meanwhile, dear cousin, I see they have brought my chariot to the lodge. You cannot walk home—get into it; it will drive you to the house, and come back for me."

I looked at him inquiringly.

"Do not fear to be deserted by me," he said, "or that I shall do any thing rashly. Vernon must accompany me to town—to our father's presence, there to expiate this foul calumny, or to prove it. Be assured he shall not approach you without your leave. I will watch over him, and guard you."

Clinton spoke aloud, and Vernon became aware that he must yield to this arrangement, and satisfied that he had divided us. Clinton led me to his carriage.

"You will hear soon from some one of us, Ellen," he said; "and let me implore you to be patient—to take care of yourself—to fear nothing.

I can make no remark — affirm, deny nothing now; but you shall not be kept in suspense. Promise me to be patient and calm.”

“And do you,” I said at last, commanding my trembling voice, “promise not to be rash; and promise not to leave England without seeing me again.”

“I promise not to leave England for any time without your leave. Oh, trust me, my dear cousin, it is not in such storms as these that you shall be ashamed of me; one sentiment may subdue me, but poverty, disgrace, and every angry passion, I can master.”

Vernon did not dare interrupt us. He felt that he had destroyed his carefully woven web, through his own rashness, and gnawed his lips in silent rage. I looked at him once, and turned away my eyes in contempt. I got into the chariot; it drove me to the house, and went back to take Clinton up to town. Thus we were separated, as we intended; and yet, how differently! Hope was re-born in my heart, out of the very ashes of its despair.

Two mortal days passed, and I was still in my solitude, receiving no intelligence, except, indeed, such as was contained in a letter from Vernon. In this he demanded me as a right, and fiercely insisted that I should keep my faith with him; but he did not allude to the scene in the park, nor to his strange assertions there. I threw the letter

from me as unworthy of notice or thought. The third morning brought me one from my uncle. I tore it open with uncontrollable impatience: these were the contents:—

“ Clinton, my dear Ellen, insists that I should join you at Beech Grove; but I cannot persuade myself to do so till I have your leave—till I have confessed my villany, and besought your forgiveness, in addition to that of my noble-hearted boy, whom I devoted to ruin before his birth, and who has pardoned me. It is a hateful subject—unfit for your ears, my gentle, virtuous girl, and I must hurry it over. When I first knew Miss Towers, I had no idea of marrying her; for she was poor and of humble birth. We loved each other, and she was willing to become mine on my own terms. Our intercourse was betrayed to her parents; and to appease them, and please Matilda, I declared that we were married. My assertion was credited; Matilda assumed my name, and all the world, all her little world, was deceived; while at the same time I declared to my father that she was merely my mistress: he did not believe me. Thus I became entangled. A little before the birth of our second boy my father died, and my grandfather offered me two thousand a-year on condition, that I would secure the whole estate to my eldest son. I loved Matilda; my fears were dissipated by my father’s death, and by this acknowledgment of my union by my grandfather. I married her; and three days after Ver-

non's birth signed the settlement of entail. Such is my story. Lady Gray's character necessitated the concealment from every human being of the period when the marriage was celebrated. My noble, beloved Clinton assumed the elder son's place. I dared not reveal the truth; nay, I fancied that I benefited him by allowing him to fill this false position till my death. He has undeceived me; but he has not cursed me. From the moment I saw you, I designed that you should repair my faults towards him, as you alone could. I believed that you were formed for each other; I was not mistaken there. I meant to acknowledge all before your marriage, but I believed that if once your affections were engaged, you would not reject my son from base and worldly-minded considerations. Am I not right also in this? Meanwhile, Clinton was abroad, and I became uneasy at observing the pains which Vernon took to ingratiate himself with you, and the intimacy which you encouraged. I forbade him to remain with you at Beech Grove—he defied me. Then I tried to entice him away from you; and, as a last bribe, disclosed the secret of his birth: he, in return, promised to leave the field open to Clinton. You know the rest. He never meant to give you up; he was my heir, and he grasped at your fortune besides—shall he succeed? Clinton is all kindness, and soothing angelic goodness—but he insists on no longer filling a situation to which he has no claim, and—is gone abroad. He fears to leave you

exposed to Vernon's violence, and has made me promise to go down to Beech Grove, and to prevent his brother from seeing you without your free and entire consent. As I have said, I cannot prevail on myself to visit you till you are in full possession of all the facts. Now they are in your hands. You may expect me to-morrow. Do not fear Vernon; I will take care that he shall not commit further outrage on you, nor injure the interest which I fondly trust that you preserve for my godlike, my beloved Clinton."

I read and re-read this letter a thousand times; my soul was in tumults. At first I could only think of the facts that it contained, and proudly and joyfully determined to compensate to Clinton, as I believed I could, for every evil; and then again I read the letter, and many parts of it filled me with wonder and dismay. Clinton was gone abroad—against his promise—without a word: and there was something so indelicate in the way in which my uncle espoused his cause. It was strange—unlike any conduct I had expected on my dear cousin's part. Of course he would write—and yet he was gone, and no letter came! And then I dreaded to see Sir Richard, the wrongful, penitent father: the total indifference which he displayed to moral principle—not founded, like Vernon's, on selfishness, but on weakness of character and natural callousness to truth, revolted me. Where was my own dear father? He had thrown me from the sacred shelter of his

virtue into a system of dissimulation and guilt, which even Clinton, I thought, deserting me as he did, did not redeem. I struggled with these feelings, but their justice confounded and overcame me. Yet, even in the midst of these disquieting reflections, a deep sense of happiness pervaded my soul. The mystery, the tyranny, which had enveloped me, was brushed away like a spider's web. I was free—I might follow the dictates of my feelings, and it was no longer sin to love him to whom my heart was irrevocably given. The hours of the day flew on, while I lived as in a dream, absorbed by wonder, hope, doubt, and joy. At length, at six in the evening, a carriage drove up the avenue; a kind of terror at the expectation of seeing my uncle seized me, and I retreated hastily to my own room, gasping for breath. In a few minutes my servant tapped at my door; she told me that it was Lady Hythe who had arrived, and delivered me a letter. The letter was from Clinton; it was dated the same day, in London. I pressed it passionately to my lips and heart, and devoured its contents with eagerness. “At length, dear Ellen,” he wrote, “I am satisfied; I was long uneasy on your account. I besought my father to go down to you, yet even that did not content me—for you did not so much need protection as sympathy and true disinterested friendship. My thoughts turned towards my earliest and dearest friend, my sister Caroline. She was on the continent—I set out immediately to meet her, to tell

every thing, and to ask her advice and assistance. Fortune befriended me—I found her at Calais—she is now with you. She is my better self. Her delicacy of character, her accurate judgment and warm heart, joined to her position as a woman, married to the best and most generous fellow breathing, render her the very person to whom I can intrust your happiness. I do not speak of myself—fortune cannot overcome my spirits, and my way is clear before me. I pity my father and family ; but Caroline will explain to you better than I can my views and hopes. Adieu, dear cousin ! Heaven bless you as you deserve ! Your fortitude, I am sure, has not deserted you ; yet I am very anxious to hear that your health has not suffered by my brother's violence. Caroline will write to me, and rejoice me by telling me of your well-being."

I hurried down immediately to welcome Clinton's sister ; and from that moment my perplexities and sorrows vanished. Lady Hythe was a feminine likeness of Clinton ; the same active kindness of heart, gentleness of temper, and adorable frankness. We were friends and sisters on the instant, and her true affection repaid me for every suffering ; none of which I should have experienced had she been in England on my arrival. Clinton had told her of his love, but left me to reveal my own sentiments, detailing only the artifices and jealousy of Vernon. I was without disguise, for we were all one family, with the same objects, hopes, and pleasures. We

went up to town immediately, and there I saw Clinton, and we exchanged our reserved, sad intercourse for a full acknowledgment of every thought and feeling.

The only piece of prudence that Sir Richard had practised was placing Clinton in the army, and purchasing promotion for him. He was so beloved by his fellow-officers, that on the discovery of his unfortunate birth, they all united in giving him the support of their friendship and good opinion. Clinton resolved, therefore, to enter at once on active service, and to follow up his profession with energy. Two years were to elapse before I could marry, and he expressed a wish that we should neither of us consider ourselves under any engagement. How vain are such words! Heaven designed us for each other, and the mere phrase of engagement or freedom could not affect a tie founded on affection, esteem, or, beyond this, the passion that caused us to find happiness in each other only. He went with his regiment to Ireland, and we were a good deal divided during the two years that elapsed before I was twenty-one. I continued to reside with Lady Hythe, and enjoyed with her that peace of mind which true friendship affords.

At length the day came when I completed my twenty-first year. Sir Richard had wished to be present at our nuptials, but was unable from ill health. I went to him, and saw him for the first time since the fatal discovery; for, on finding that

I was happily placed with his daughter, he had carefully avoided seeing me. His character, indeed, was wholly changed. While carrying on a system of dissimulation, he had appeared gay; he was extravagant; given up to pleasure, and spending even beyond his large income, despite the ruin in which he knew that his son would be involved on his death. He made him indeed a princely allowance, as if that was to compensate to him; while, in fact, Clinton was only thus habituated to expense. As soon as the discovery was made, Sir Richard, by one of those inconceivable changes which sometimes occur in the history of human nature, set his heart on saving a fortune for his beloved boy. He thought that I might be fickle; he feared his own death and the loss of power to benefit him. He gave up his establishment in town—he let Beech Grove—he saved every farthing that he could, and was enabled to settle twenty thousand pounds on Clinton on the day of our marriage.

I went to see him in a little lodging at Camberwell, whither he had retreated: he was emaciated and ill; his eyes brightened a little on seeing Clinton and me together.

“I would fain live a little longer,” he said, “to increase my son’s fortune; but God’s will be done—you will make him happy, Ellen.”

We were inexpressibly shocked. He had concealed his penurious style of life and declining health all this time; and nothing but his illness, and

our insisting upon seeing him, caused him to betray it now. Our first care after our marriage was to oblige him to take up his abode with us; and we devoted ourselves to calming his remorse and smoothing his path to the grave. He survived only four months; but he had the comfort of knowing that Clinton was satisfied and happy; and that we both from our hearts forgave the errors which he at last expiated so dearly.

We never saw Vernon again; nor can I tell what has happened to him, except that he lives the life of the rich in England, apparently attended by prosperity. Lady Hythe stood between me and him, and screened me from his violence and reproaches. He has never married. I have never seen him since the day when, in the park at Beech Grove, he unawares conferred on me every blessing of life, by releasing me from the ties that bound me to him.

The happiness of Clinton and myself has been unclouded. I at last persuaded him to give up his profession, and we live principally abroad. Lord and Lady Hythe frequently visit us; and every event of our lives—the unimportant events of domestic life—tends to increase our prosperity, and the entire affection we cherish for each other.

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THE HON. MRS. LEICESTER STANHOPE.

BY N. T. WILLIS, ESQ.

WHAT dost thou hear?
Has the hymn of a fairy reached thine ear?
Dost thou list the praise of thy beauty, sung
By the amorous leaves thou art lost among?
Is the cluster of buds and roses there
Of the presence of lips more bright aware?
And have they a voice, as minstrels say,
For all things dewy and fair as they?

What dost thou see?
Has a sky-bound angel stoop'd to thee?
Doth some loving zephyr, with wings of light,
Hover reveal'd in thy mortal sight?
Has a ray of a star, that should sleep by day,
Stole back with the sun, in thine eyes to play?
Do light and air, as the minstrel sings,
Yearn to the beauty of mortal things?

Ay! gaze and listen!
On thy Phidian brow the bright gems glisten,
But the gnomes that wrought these diamonds fine
Knew not their bed in the Indian mine,





As the spirits of love, in the earth and air,
Know every charm in a form so fair.
Thou wert never alone, oh, lovely one !
By dewy morn, or by setting sun.

Thou hast felt a thrill, thou knew'st not why,
From the summer wind, from the golden sky —
The slightest leaf, the meanest flower,
Has touch'd thy heart in some lonely hour ;
Though thy fondest friend had farthest flown,
Thou hadst not been in that hour alone.

Oh ! the life that stirs in the panting rose,
The vital breath in each breeze that blows,
The far-sent ray of the arrowy light,
Perfume and music, by day and night —
I have sometimes thought they come and go
With a spirit's power to see and know ;
And, with eyes alive to beauty, even
Haunt upon earth what-is most like heaven !

LINES

BY SIR W. SOMERVILLE, BART.

“ Come like shadows—so depart.”

How strange the thoughts which sometimes creep
Across the mind when lull'd in sleep !
How often will the friends of youth—
The friends we loved with fondness, truth—
Who through weak childhood's early years
Have soothed our sorrows, calm'd our fears,
And boyhood's inexperience led,
But long since number'd with the dead—
Appear before us then, as though
They still were sojourners below ;
Recalling times long past and flown,
O'er which Oblivion's veil is thrown ;
And which our waking thoughts, though fain,
Would strive to represent in vain !

'Tis strange, indeed ! and must it be,
That this is mock reality ?
Oh, may not they whom still we love,
Though gone, regard us from above
With care unceasing, faithful, true,
The first at the last rendezvous ;
And deign alone to cross the mind
Then, when, from worldly dross refined,

In silent sleep—in slumber still—
They mould our fancies to their will?

Oh, yes!—at least 'tis sweet to think
There may be some mysterious link,
Some secret, sympathetic thread
Between the living and the dead!
The dead to us, by destined doom,
But who survive beyond the tomb,
And feel a joy, unmix'd with pain,
In that bright thought—"We meet again."

But should philosopher or sage
Be so far read in nature's page,
As unrelentless to destroy
This fabric of a cherish'd joy,
And, sternly cruel, to declare
"Such things are not"—my fancy spare!
Then will I never farther look,
Then self-deluded close the book,
Nor seek that wisdom to obtain
Which changes joy, though false, to pain;
And, oh! may my delusion last
Till all uncertainty be past!

THE CARRIER-PIGEON.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "VIVIAN GREY."

I.

ALTHOUGH the deepest shades of twilight had descended upon the broad bosom of the valley, and the river might almost be recognised only by its rushing sound, the walls and battlements of the castle of Charolois, situate on one of the loftiest heights, still blazed in the reflected radiance of the setting sun, and cast, as it were, a glance of triumph at the opposing castle of Branchimont, that rose on the western side of the valley, with its lofty turrets and its massy keep black and sharply defined against the resplendent heaven.

Deadly was the hereditary feud between the powerful lords of these high places—the Counts of Charolois and the Barons of Branchimont; but the hostility which had been maintained for ages never perhaps raged with more virulence than at this moment; since the only male heir of the house of Charolois had been slain in a tournament by the late Baron of Branchimont, and the distracted father had avenged his irreparable loss in the life-blood of the involuntary murderer of his son.



Yet the pilgrim, who at this serene hour might rest upon his staff and gaze on the surrounding scene, would hardly deem that the darkest passions of our nature had selected this fair and silent spot for the theatre of their havoc.

The sun set; the evening star, quivering and bright, rose over the dark towers of Branchimont; from the opposite bank a musical bell summoned the devout vassals of Charolois to a beautiful shrine, wherein was deposited the heart of their late young lord, and which his father had raised on a small and richly wooded promontory, distant about a mile from his stern hold.

At the first chime on this lovely eve came forth a lovelier maiden from the postern of Charolois—the Lady Imogene, the only remaining child of the bereaved count, attended by her page, bearing her book of prayers. She took her way along the undulating heights until she reached the sanctuary. The altar was illumined; several groups were already kneeling, faces of fidelity well known to their adored lady; but as she entered, a palmer, with his broad hat drawn over his face, and closely muffled up in his cloak, dipped his hand at the same time with hers in the fount of holy water placed at the entrance of the shrine, and pressed the beautiful fingers of the Lady Imogene. A blush, unperceived by the kneeling votaries, rose to her cheek; but apparently such was her self-control, or such her deep respect for the hallowed spot, that she exhibited

no other symptom of emotion, and, walking to the high altar, was soon buried in her devotions.

The mass was celebrated—the vassals rose and retired. According to her custom, the Lady Imogene yet remained, and knelt before the tomb of her brother. A low whisper, occasionally sounding, assured her that some one was at the confessional; and soon the palmer, who was now shrived, knelt at her side. “Lothair!” muttered the lady, apparently at her prayers, “beloved Lothair, thou art too bold!”

“Oh, Imogene! for thee what would I not venture!” was the hushed reply.

“For the sake of all our hopes, wild though they be, I counsel caution.”

“Fear nought. The priest, flattered by my confession, is fairly duped. Let me employ this golden moment to urge what I have before entreated. Your father, Imogene, can never be appeased. Fly, then, my beloved! oh, fly!”

“Oh, my Lothair! it never can be. Alas! whither can we fly?”

“Sweet love! I pray thee listen:—to Italy. At the court of my cousin, the Duke of Milan, we shall be safe and happy. What care I for Branchimont, and all its fortunes? And for that, my vassals are no traitors. If ever the bright hour arrive when we may return in joy, trust me, sweet love, my flag will still wave on my father’s walls.”

“Oh, Lothair! why did we meet? Why, meet-

ing, did we not hate each other like our fated race?
My heart is distracted. Can this misery be love?
Yet I adore thee ——”

“Lady!” said the page advancing, “the priest approaches.”

The Lady Imogene rose, and crossed herself before the altar.

“To-morrow, at this hour,” whispered Lothair.

The Lady Imogene nodded assent, and, leaning on her page, quitted the shrine.

II.

“Dearest Lady,” said the young page, as they returned to the castle, “my heart misgives me. As we quitted the shrine, I observed Rufus, the huntsman, slink into the adjoining wood.”

“Hah! He is my father’s most devoted instrument: nor is there any bidding which he would hesitate to execute—a most ruthless knave!”

“And can see like a cat in the dark, too,” observed young Theodore.

“I never loved that man, even in my cradle,” said the Lady Imogene; “though he can fawn, too. Did he indeed avoid us?”

“Indeed I thought so, Madam.”

“Ah! my Theodore, we have no friend but you, and you are but a little page.”

“I would I were a stout knight, lady, and I would fight for you.”

“I warrant you,” said Imogene; “you have a

bold heart, little Theodore, and a kind one. Oh, holy Virgin! I pray thee guard in all perils my bright-eyed Lothair!"

"Lord Branchimont is the finest knight I ever set eyes upon," said Theodore. "I would I were his squire."

"Thou shalt be his squire, too, little Theodore, if all goes well."

"Oh! glorious day, when I shall wear a sword instead of a scarf! Shall I indeed be his squire, lady sweet?"

"Indeed I think thou wilt make a very proper squire."

"I would I were a knight like Lord Branchimont; as tall as a lance, and as strong as a lion; and such a fine beard too!"

"It is indeed a beard, Theodore," said the Lady Imogene. "When wilt thou have one like it?"

"Another summer, perchance," said Theodore, passing his small palm musingly over his smooth chin.

"Another summer!" said the Lady Imogene, laughing; "why, I may as soon hope to have a beard myself."

"I hope you will have Lord Branchimont's," said the page.

"Amen!" responded the lady.

III.

The apprehensions of the little Theodore proved to be too well founded. On the morning after the

meeting of Lady Imogene with Lord Branchimont at the shrine of Charolois, she was summoned to the presence of her father; and, after having been loaded with every species of reproach and invective for her clandestine meeting with their hereditary foe, she was confined to a chamber in one of the loftiest towers of the castle, which she was never permitted to quit, except to walk in a long gloomy gallery, with an old female servant remarkable for the acerbity of her mind and manners. Her page escaped punishment by flight; and her only resource and amusement was her mandolin.

The tower in which the Lady Imogene was imprisoned sprang out of a steep so precipitous that the position was considered impregnable. She was therefore permitted to open her lattice, which was not even barred. The landscape before her, which was picturesque and richly wooded, consisted of the enclosed chase of Charolois; but her jailers had taken due care that her chamber should not command a view of the castle of Branchimont. The valley and all its moving life were indeed entirely shut out from her. Often the day vanished without a human being appearing in sight. Very unhappy was the Lady Imogene, gazing on the silent woods, or pouring forth her passion over her lonely lute.

A miserable week had nearly elapsed. It was noon; the Lady Imogene was seated alone in her chamber, leaning her head upon her hand in thought,

and dreaming of her Lothair, when a fluttering noise suddenly roused her, and, looking up, she beheld, to her astonishment, perched on the high back of a chair, a beautiful bird—a pigeon whiter than snow, with an azure beak, and eyes blazing with a thousand shifting tints. Not alarmed was the beautiful bird when the Lady Imogene gently approached it; but it looked up to her with eyes of intelligent tenderness, and flapped with some earnestness its pure and sparkling plume. The Lady Imogene smiled with marvelling pleasure, and for the first time since her captivity; and putting forth her hand, which was even whiter than the wing, she patted the bright neck of the glad stranger, and gently stroked its soft plumage.

“Heaven hath sent me a friend,” exclaimed the beautiful Imogene; “Ah! what—what is this?”

“Didst thou call, Lady Imogene?” inquired the harsh voice of acid Martha, whom the exclamation of her mistress had summoned to the door.

“Nothing—nothing—I want nothing,” quickly answered Imogene, as she seized the bird up with her hand, and, pressing it to her bosom, answered Martha over her shoulder. “Did she see thee, my treasure?” continued the agitated Imogene, “Oh! did she see thee, my joy? Methinks we were not discovered.” So saying, and tripping along on the lightest step imaginable, the captive secured the door; then bringing forth the bird from its sweet shelter, she produced a letter, which she had sud-

denly detected to be fastened under its left wing, and which she had perceived, in an instant, to be written by Lord Branchimont.

Her sight was dizzy, her cheek pale, her breath seemed to have deserted her. She looked up to heaven, she looked down upon the letter, and then she covered it with a thousand kisses ; then, making a vigorous effort to collect herself, she read its strange and sweet contents :—

“ LOTHAIR TO IMOGENE.

“ Soul of my existence ! Mignon, in whom you may place implicit trust, has promised me to bear you this sign of my love. Oh, I love you, Imogene ! I love you more even than this bird can the beautiful sky ! Kiss the dove a thousand times, that I may steal the kisses again from his neck, and catch, even at this distance, your fragrant breath. My beloved, I am planning your freedom and our happiness. Each day Mignon shall come to tell you how we speed ; each day shall he bring back some testimony of your fidelity to your own

“ LOTHAIR.”

It was read—it was read with gushing and fast-flowing tears—tears of wild joy. A thousand times, ay, a thousand times, Imogene embraced the faithful Mignon ; nor could she indeed have ever again parted with him, had she not remembered that all

this time her Lothair was anxiously awaiting the return of his messenger. So she tore a leaf from her tablets and inscribed her devotion ; then, fastening it with care under the wing, she bore Mignon to the window, and, bestowing upon him a last embrace, permitted him to extend his beautiful wings and launch into the air.

Bright in the sun glanced the white bird as it darted into the deep-blue sky. Imogene watched it until the sparkling form changed into a dusky shade, and the dusky shade vanished into the blending distance.

IV.

It was now a principal object with the fair captive of Charolois, that her unsympathising attendant should enter her chamber as little as possible, and only at seasons when there was no chance of a visit from Mignon. Faithful was the beautiful bird in these daily visits of consolation ; and, by his assistance, the correspondence with Lothair respecting her escape was actively maintained. A thousand plans were formed by the sanguine lovers—a thousand plans were canvassed, and then decided to be impracticable. One day, Martha was to be bribed ; another, young Theodore was to re-enter the castle disguised as a girl, and become, by some contrivance, her attendant ; but reflection ever proved that these were as wild as lovers' plans are wont to be ; and another week stole away without any thing being

settled. Yet this second week was not so desolate as the first. On the contrary, it was full of exciting hope; and each day to hear that Lothair still adored her, and each day to be enabled to breathe back to him her own adoration, solaced the hours of her captivity. But Fate, that will often frown upon the fortunes of true love, decided that this sweet source of consolation should flow on no longer. Rufus, the huntsman, who was ever prowling about, and who at all times had a terribly quick eye for a bird, one day observed the carrier-pigeon sallying forth from the window of the tower. His practised sense instantly assured him that the bird was trained, and he resolved to watch its course.

“Hah, hah!” said Rufus, the huntsman, “is Branchimont thy dovecot? Methinks, my little rover, thou bearest news I long to read.”

Another and another day passed, and again and again Rufus observed the visits of Mignon; so, taking his cross-bow one fair morning, ere the dew had left the flowers, he wandered forth in the direction of Branchimont. True to his mission, Mignon soon appears, skimming along the sky. Beautiful, beautiful bird! Fond, faithful messenger of love! Who can doubt that thou well comprehendest the kindly purpose of thy consoling visits! Thou bringest joy to the unhappy, and hope to the despairing! She shall kiss thee, bright Mignon! Yes! an embrace from lips sweeter than the scented dawn in which thou revelest, shall repay thee for

all thy fidelity! And already the Lady Imogene is at her post, gazing upon the unclouded sky, and straining her beautiful eyes, as it were to anticipate the slight and gladsome form, whose first presence ever makes her heart tremble with a host of wild and conflicting emotions.

Ah! through the air an arrow from a bow that never erred—an arrow swifter than thy swiftest flight, Mignon, whizzes with fell intent. The snake that darts upon its unconscious prey less fleet and fatal! It touches thy form—it transfixes thy beautiful breast! Was there no good spirit, then, to save thee, thou hope of the hopeless! Alas, alas! the blood gushes from thy breast, and from thine azure beak! Thy transcendant eye grows dim—all is over! The carrier-pigeon falls to the earth!

V.

A day without hearing from Lothair was madness; and, indeed, when hour after heavy hour rolled away without the appearance of Mignon, and the Lady Imogene found herself gazing upon the vanishing twilight, she became nearly frantic with disappointment and terror. While light remained, an indefinite hope maintained her; but when it was indeed night, and nothing but the outline of the surrounding hills was perceptible, she could no longer restrain herself; and, bursting into hysteric tears, she threw herself upon the floor of her chamber. Were they discovered? Had Lothair forgotten

her? Wearied with fruitless efforts, had he left her to her miserable, her solitary fate? There was a slight sound—something seemed to have dropped. She looked up. At her side she beheld a letter, which, wrapped round a stone, had been thrown in at the window. She started up in an ecstasy of joy. She cursed herself for doubting for an instant the fidelity of her lover! She tore open the letter; but so great was her emotion that some minutes elapsed before she could decipher its contents. At length she learned that, on the ensuing eve, Lothair and Theodore, disguised as huntsmen of Charolois, would contrive to meet in safety beneath her window, and for the rest she must dare to descend. It was a bold, a very perilous plan. It was the project of desperation. But there are moments in life when desperation becomes success. Nor was the spirit of the Lady Imogene one that would easily quail. Hers was a true woman's heart; and she could venture every thing for love. She examined the steep; she cast a rapid glance at the means of making the descent: her shawls, her clothes, the hangings of her bed—here were resources—here was hope!

Full of these thoughts, some time elapsed before she was struck at the unusual mode in which the communication reached her. Where was Mignon? But the handwriting was the handwriting of Lothair. That she could not mistake. She might, however, have observed, that the characters were faint—that the paper had the appearance of being stained or

washed; but this she did not observe. She was sanguine—she was confident in the wisdom of Lothair. She knelt before an image of the Virgin, and poured forth her supplications for the success of their enterprise. And then, exhausted by all the agitation of the day, the Lady Imogene sunk into a deep repose.

VI.

Morn came at length, but brought no Mignon! “He has his reasons,” answered the Lady Imogene: “Lothair is never wrong. And soon, right soon, I hope, we shall need no messenger.” Oh, what a long, long day was this, the last of her captivity! Will the night never come—that night she had once so much dreaded? Sun, wilt thou never set? There is no longer gladness in thy beams. The shadows, indeed, grow longer, and yet thine orb is as high in heaven as if it were an everlasting noon! The unceasing cry of the birds, once so consoling, now only made her restless. She listened, and she listened, until at length the rosy sky called forth their last trilling chant, and the star of evening summoned them to roost.

It was twilight: pacing her chamber, and praying to the Virgin, the hours at length stole away. The chimes of the sanctuary told her that it wanted but a quarter of an hour to midnight. Already she had formed a rope of shawls: now she fastened it to the lattice with all her force. The bell struck

twelve, and the Lady Imogene delivered herself to her fate. Slowly and fearfully she descended, long suspended in the air, until her feet at length touched a ledge of rock. Cautiously feeling her footing, she now rested, and looked around her. She had descended about twenty feet. The moon shone bright on the rest of the descent, which was more rugged. It seemed not impracticable—she clambered down.

“Hist! hist!” said a familar voice, “all is right, lady—but why did you not answer us?”

“Ah! Theodore, where is my Lothair?”

“Lord Branchimont is shaded by the trees—give me thy hand, sweet lady. Courage! all is right; but indeed you should have answered us.”

Imogene de Charolois is in the arms of Lothair de Branchimont.

“We have no time for embraces,” said Theodore; “the horses are ready. The Virgin be praised, all is right. I would not go through such an eight-and-forty hours again to be dubbed a knight on the spot. Have you Mignon?”

“Mignon, indeed! he has not visited me these two days.”

“But my letter,” said Lothair — “you received it?”

“It was thrown in at my window,” said the Lady Imogene.

“My heart misgives me,” said little Theodore. “Away! there is no time to lose. Hist! I hear

footsteps. This way, dear friends. Hist! a shout! Fly! fly! Lord Branchimont, we are betrayed!"

And indeed from all quarters simultaneous sounds now rose, and torches seemed suddenly to wave in all quarters. Imogene clung to the neck of Lothair. "We will die together!" she exclaimed, as she hid her face in his breast.

Lord Branchimont placed himself against a tree, and drew his mighty sword.

"Seize him!" shouted a voice, instantly recognised by Imogene; "seize the robber!" shouted her father.

"At your peril!" answered Lothair to his surrounding foes.

They stood at bay — an awful group! The father and his murdering minions, alike fearful of encountering Branchimont and slaying their chieftain's daughter; the red and streaming torches blending with the silver moonlight that fell full upon the fixed countenance of their entrapped victim and the distracted form of his devoted mistress.

There was a dead, still pause. It was broken by the denouncing tone of the father, "Cowards! do you fear a single arm? Strike him dead! spare not the traitress!"

But still the vassals would not move; deep as was their feudal devotion, they loved the Lady Imogene, and dared to disobey.

"Let me, then, teach you your duty!" exclaimed the exasperated father. He advanced, but a wild

shriek arrested his extended sword; and as thus they stood, all alike prepared for combat, yet all motionless, an arrow glanced over the shoulder of the Count and pierced Lord Branchimont to the heart. His sword fell from his grasp, and he died without a groan.

Yes! the same bow that had for ever arrested the airy course of Mignon, had now, as fatally and as suddenly, terminated the career of the master of the carrier-pigeon. Vile Rufus, the huntsman, the murderous aim was thine!

VII.

The bell of the shrine of Charolois is again sounding; but how different its tone from the musical and inspiring chime that summoned the weary vassals to their grateful vespers! The bell of the shrine of Charolois is again sounding. Alas! it tolls a gloomy knell. Oh! valley of sweet waters, still are thy skies as pure as when she wandered by thy banks and mused over her beloved! Still sets thy glowing sun; and quivering and bright, like the ascending soul of a hero, still Hesperus rises from thy dying glory! But she, the maiden fairer than the fairest eve—no more shall her light step trip among the fragrance of its flowers; no more shall her lighter voice emulate the music of thy melodious birds. Oh, yes! she is dead—the beautiful Imogene is dead! Three days of misery heralded her decease. But comfort is there in all

things ; for the good priest who had often administered consolation to his unhappy mistress over her brother's tomb, and who knelt by the side of her dying couch, assured many a sorrowful vassal, and many a sympathising pilgrim who loved to listen to the mournful tale, that her death was indeed a beatitude ; for he did not doubt, from the distracted expressions that occasionally caught his ear, that the Holy Spirit, in that material form he most loves to honour, to wit, the semblance of a pure white dove, often solaced by his presence the last hours of Imogene de Charolois !





THE LATE DUCHESS OF GORDON.

THUS wert thou once! and thus the limner's art
(Too limited) hath shadowed forth in part
One of fair Nature's many gifts, when she
Breath'd Beauty, as her crowning grace, on thee!—
Shadow'd, indeed! The pencil fails to trace
Aught but a vision of that lovely face:
And yet the eye—the expressive lip—the brow—
Thought's handmaids and interpreters—e'en now
(Though faintly here portray'd) remain to prove
Thy claims to admiration and to love.

But vain the hope in mimic art to find
What but in memory can live enshrined;
The gay discourse — imagination's fire —
The look which could or love or awe inspire;
The laugh — the repartee — the sparkling wit,
Which, like the sun's bright rays quick glancing, lit
All that its powerful magic touch'd, and made
Joy spring, like summer flowers, where'er it play'd.
All—all are past!—and, silent now and still,
Defy, alas! the painter's utmost skill;
Though, looking on the picture, we would fain
Believe the lips — the eyes — could move again,
And, with one smile — one look — bid life appear,
To cheat our senses still to think Thee here.

But are they gone indeed ? Gifts rich and rare
Like these shall none be worthy deemed to share ?
Shall they, alas ! be fated still to roam,
Seeking, with vain regret, a genial home ?
No—they are left to decorate and crown
Those loved on earth, on whom thy shade looks
down !

And as the flashing beacon sparkling glows,
Though quench'd the parent fire from which it rose,
So talent, beauty, grace, united shine,
A bright inheritance from thee to thine !

LINES

BY THE HON. GRANTLEY BERKELEY.

IN one of those sweet days when Autumn's sun
Had warmed the last ripe blush on fruit and field—
When harvest, though its labour long begun,
Had still the latest of its stores to yield—
High on a lofty hill, with swelling vein,
And quivering ear, and nostril spreading wide,
Yet all impatient of the tighten'd rein,
A steed stood panting from a lengthen'd ride.
Erect and still, a rider sat him there,
And gazed upon the landscape far below ;
Upon his mind there lay a load of care
Full broadly mark'd on that dark frowning brow.
He paus'd to view the village church and green—
He felt the quiet of the autumn day ;
His mind then wander'd in the well-known scene,
And care no longer held her tyrant sway.
A thousand mellow'd sounds salute his ear—
The lingering essence of the latest flow'r
Was borne on friendly wings, and hover'd near,
Like some sweet spirit of a bygone hour.
But where was she who used to stand beside
Yon ivy'd window, anxious but to hear
The well-known steed that he was wont to ride
Beat the broad road with footstep high and clear ?

Where were those eyes that brightly gleamed with
 joy,
 Where the red lip that speechless press'd his
 brow,
 Where the warm heart that loved him from a boy,
 Where the rich mind 'twas his alone to know?
 Where is she now? Bright hope shall answer—
 There,
 Where shines the heav'nly sun that ne'er may
 die,
 When all that's good is raised from earth to share
 The everlasting bliss of purity.
 Each thought engendered by that quiet scene
 Passed like a dream across that stranger's mind,
 And left it like a garden where hath been
 The blighting blast of Winter's wasting wind.
 Joyless and comfortless his look was met—
 No hurried footstep to the portal flew;
 And dreary cobwebs on the wall were set,
 Where once the snowy curtain met the view.
 List to yon chime!—it is the village bell,
 Tolling at intervals—and now 'tis past;
 How mournfully it peals the parting knell
 Of some poor peasant who had breathed his last!
 But has that plaintive, slow, and solemn sound,
 Armed the sharp heel to goad the startled
 steed,
 So fiercely, as to make him wildly bound
 Down the high mountain-path with madden'd
 speed?

One look the rider to the churchyard sped,
Heaved his broad breast, then thunder'd to the
plain ;
And as once more he turned his throbbing head,
The tears were falling on his breast like rain.

IMAGINARY CONVERSATION.

BY WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR, ESQ.

STEEL AND ADDISON.

ADDISON.—Dick! I am come to remonstrate with you on those unlucky habits which have been so detrimental to your health and fortune.

STEEL.—Many thanks, Mr. Addison; but really my fortune is not much improved by your arresting me for the hundred pounds; nor is my health, if spirits are an indication of it, on seeing my furniture sold by auction to raise the money.

ADDISON.—Pooh, pooh, Dick! what furniture had you about the house?

STEEL.—At least I had the arm-chair, of which you never before had dispossessed me longer than the evening; and happy should I have been to enjoy your company in it again and again, if you had left it me.

ADDISON.—We will contrive to hire another. I do assure you, my dear Dick, I have really felt for you.

STEEL.—I only wish, my kind friend, you had not put out your feelers quite so far, nor exactly in this direction; and that my poor wife had received an hour's notice; she might have carried a few

trinkets to some neighbour. She wanted her salts; and the bailiff thanked her for the bottle that contained them, telling her the gold head of it was worth pretty nearly half-a-guinea.

ADDISON.—Lady Steel then wanted her smelling-bottle! Dear me! the weather, I apprehend, is about to change. Have you any symptoms of your old gout?

STEEL.—My health has been long on the decline, you know.

ADDISON.—Too well I know it, my dear friend, and I hinted it as delicately as I could. Nothing on earth besides this consideration should have induced me to pursue a measure in appearance so unfriendly. You must grow more temperate—you really must.

STEEL.—Mr. Addison, you did not speak so gravely and so firmly when we used to meet at Will's. You always drank as much as I did, and often invited and pressed me to continue, when I was weary, sleepy, and sick.

ADDISON.—You thought so, because you were drunk. Indeed, at my own house I have sometimes asked you to take another glass, in compliance with the rules of society and hospitality.

STEEL.—Once, it is true, you did it at your house; the only time I ever had an invitation to dine in it. The Countess was never fond of the wit that smells of wine: her husband could once endure it.

ADDISON.—We could talk more freely, you know, at the tavern. There we have dined together some hundred times.

STEEL.—Most days, for many years.

ADDISON.—Ah, Dick! Since we first met there, several of our friends are gone off the stage.

STEEL.—And some are still acting.

ADDISON.—Forbear, my dear friend, to joke and smile at infirmities or vices. Many have departed from us, in consequence, I apprehend, of indulging in the bottle! When passions are excited, when reason is disturbed, when reputation is sullied, when fortune is squandered, and when health is lost by it, a retreat is sounded in vain. Some cannot hear it, others will not profit by it.

STEEL.—I must do you the justice to declare, that I never saw any other effect of hard drinking upon you, than to make you more circumspect and silent?

ADDISON.—If ever I urged you, in the warmth of my heart, to transgress the bounds of sobriety, I entreat you, as a Christian, to forgive me.

STEEL.—Most willingly, most cordially.

ADDISON.—I feel confident that you will think of me, speak of me, and write of me, as you have ever done, without a diminution of esteem. We are feeble creatures; we want one another's aid and assistance,—a want ordained by Providence, to shew us at once our insufficiency and our strength. We must not abandon our friends from

slight motives, nor let our passions be our interpreters in their own cause. Consistency is not more requisite to the sound Christian, than to the accomplished politician.

STEEL.—I am inconsistent in my resolutions of improvement,—no man ever was more so; but my attachments have a nerve in them neither to be deadened by ill treatment, nor loosened by indulgence. A man grievously wounded, knows by the acuteness of his pain that a spirit of vitality is yet in him. I know that I retain my friendship for you by what you have made me suffer.

ADDISON.—Entirely for your own good, I do protest, if you could see it.

STEEL.—Alas! all our sufferings are so: the only mischief is, that we have no organs for perceiving it.

ADDISON.—You reason well, my worthy sir; and relying on your kindness in my favour (for every man has enemies, and those mostly who serve their friends best), I say, Dick, on those considerations, since you never broke your word with me, and since I am certain you would be sorry it were known that only fourscore pounds' worth could be found in the house, I renounce for the present the twenty yet wanting. Do not beat about for an answer; say not one word: farewell.

STEEL.—Ah! could not that cold heart, often and long as I reposed on it, bring me to my senses! I have indeed been drunken; but it is hard to

awaken in such heaviness as this of mine is. I shared his poverty with him ; I never aimed to share his prosperity. Well, well ; I cannot break old habits. I love my glass—I love Addison. Each will partake in killing me. Why cannot I see him again in the arm-chair, his right hand upon his heart, under the fawn-coloured waistcoat, his brow erect and clear as his conscience ; his wig even and composed as his temper, with measurely curls and antithetical top-knots, like his style ; the calmest poet, the most quiet patriot ; dear Addison ! drunk, deliberate, moral, sentimental ; foaming over with truth and virtue, with tenderness and friendship, and only the worse in one ruffle for the wine.

THE BOAT OF LIFE.

BY THOMAS MOORE, ESQ.

LET's take this world as some wide scene,
Through which, in frail but buoyant boat,
With skies now rude, and now serene,
Together thou and I must float ;
Beholding oft, on either shore,
Bright spots where we should love to stay ;
But Time plies swift his flying oar,
And on we speed—away, away !

Should chilling winds and rain come on,
We'll raise our awning 'gainst the shower ;
Sit closer till the storm is gone,
And smiling wait a sunnier hour.
And if that sunnier hour should shine,
We'll know its brightness cannot stay,
And, happy while 'tis thine and mine,
Complain not when it fades away.

Thus reach we both, at last, that fall
Down which Life's currents all must go—
The dark, the brilliant, destined all
To sink into the void below :

Nor ev'n that hour shall want its charms,
If side by side still fond we keep,
And calmly, in each other's arms
Together link'd, go down the steep.



Painted by Thomas Kneller

Engraved by W. H. Mort

ALTENDORF.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "CECIL HYDE."

I.

It was on a sultry afternoon in the month of July 183—, that a dark-coloured britska, undistinguished by any heraldic decoration, rattled up to the door of the principal hostelry in the ancient and venerable city of Conradsburgh—the metropolis and chief residence of his serene highness the Margrave of —.

We deem it advisable, for reasons chiefly political, to suppress the full designation of this august potentate, and we have consequently taken the liberty to alter the name of his capital. We shall also, in farther development of this principle of discretion, be silent as to the exact geographical position which the dominions of his serene highness occupy among the Germanic states; trusting that the reader will appreciate the motives which induce us to withhold from his laudable curiosity certain statistical facts of no material consequence to the progress of our narrative, the authenticity of which, he will not, we are confident, be on that account the more disposed to call in question.

The arrival of the above-mentioned vehicle, evidently foreign in build, and decidedly aristocratic in appearance, constituted, in the quiet state of the city, at that moment, an event of sufficient importance to attract the attention of three officers of his serene highness's body guard, who were sauntering leisurely along the street, on their return from afternoon parade.

The three gentlemen accordingly drew up in line, at a little distance, to observe the travellers, as they alighted from the carriage, and were ushered into the caravanserai by its worthy and portly proprietor, Herr Sigismond Hoffmann; an individual who, *quant au moral*, at least, requires no more exact description; the whole tribe of hotel-keepers, throughout Europe, being as like each other as gipsies or hackney-coachmen—obsequious, smirking, and sincere, as a court chamberlain; wily as an Austrian diplomatist; rapacious as a party of dragoons on a foraging expedition; and, like his Majesty's Life Guards at Waterloo, tremendous in a *charge*!

The curiosity of our military friends was not destined to be completely gratified. The new arrivals consisted of an elderly man of distinguished exterior, and a lady, the slighthness and elegance of whose figure, as displayed in a dark riding-habit, proclaimed her to be young; but the thick green veil which covered her face, together with her very rapid passage from the carriage to the hotel, pre-

cluded the possibility of any accurate observation on the part of the three *connoisseurs*, with respect to her features or complexion.

Conceiving that there was nothing particularly interesting in the operations of the French valet and *femme de chambre* who had occupied the rumble, and who were now busily engaged in unpacking the carriage, accompanying the performances with a vast deal of superfluous volubility and gesticulation,—the three guardsmen passed on, without compromising their dignity by any inquiry concerning the name, rank, or condition of the strangers; which, nevertheless, they felt a considerable degree of anxiety to investigate.

“*Pas mal*, in point of figure and *tournure*,” observed Leo von Bürckenthal, the eldest of the party; “but she might as well have allowed us to see her face.”

“Bah!” said Adolphe de Gernonville, a young Frenchman in the service of the margrave; “no woman ever keeps her veil down, under such circumstances, if she has a face worth looking at. Depend upon it, she is *passée*, or a fright.”

“Impossible!” exclaimed Friedrich von Altendorf. “That light airy step had all the elasticity of eighteen; and if she is not handsome, there is no truth in my system of analogies. Such a foot and ankle could not belong to any thing short of an angel.”

“*Voilà comme vous êtes tous, vous autres Alle-*

mands !" rejoined Gernonville. "*Toujours des systèmes—de la métaphysique ! C'est inconcevable !* For my part, I have been so often deceived by a back view, that I am disposed to reverse the old adage, *fronti nulla fides*. I recollect being once led a dance half over the Bois de Boulogne, in chase of what appeared to me a remarkably engaging nymph, with a most unexceptionable air and *démarche* : and when, after a very active pursuit, I came up with the object of my sentimental curiosity, I was petrified on discovering that it was—my grandmother !"

"Well," said Bürckenthal, "we must concede the point to you, in the present instance, and allow you to be the best judge, as these people are evidently your *compatriotes*."

"Not at all," said Altendorf; "I pronounce them to be English. A certain distinguished and high-bred air . . ."

"Ah !" interrupted Gernonville, laughing, "that is poor Fritz's *foible*. *C'est sa marotte—il est Anglomane, comme on l'était à Paris sous Louis Seize !* But I shall not contest the matter with him, until I see whether the lady is worthy to be claimed as a countrywoman. In the mean time, Fritz, *mon cher*, allow me to ask you, how comes it that your thoughts are always running on England and the English ? You have never lived among those sulky islanders, and can know very little about them."

"You are mistaken, Adolphe," said Altendorf; "I have been in England."

"Then I would wager my chance of the Green Eagle," said Bürckenthal, "and that, *par parenthèse*, is no very extravagant bet,—that you have left your heart there. But this is the first I have heard of it. What could induce you to make a secret of your trip?"

"The fact is," said Altendorf, "it was undertaken without my poor father's knowledge; and, indeed, to confess the truth, in the teeth of his especial prohibition. He had, no matter why, an invincible repugnance to my visiting that country; and, from the perverseness of human nature, I suppose, I felt an equally strong anxiety in the opposite direction. I was aware that had he discovered the fact of my playing truant, he would have been seriously angry: and, therefore, during his life, I maintained a discreet silence on the subject, considering my secret safest in my own keeping. Since I have had the misfortune to lose him, however, all necessity for concealment is over."

"But how did you contrive to evade the paternal vigilance?" inquired Gernonville. "Had you the magic carpet in the *Mille et Une Nuits* to waft you thither, and bring you back before you were missed?"

"There was no enchantment in the case," said Altendorf. "I had got as far as Paris with the paternal sanction; and a week's trip thence to London was easily achieved. I knew the *bureau*

des Affaires Étrangères had something better to do than report my proceedings to the people here. But, for fear of accidents, I deemed it advisable to get my passport made out in a different name from my own; and, accordingly, made free, for the occasion, with my great-grandmother's patronymic, Von Rolleston."

"That is what I call taking a very impertinent liberty with one's ancestors," said Gernonville. "It is little better than a practical calumny on the exemplary family in question, to make their name answerable for all the *fredaines* of which, I make no doubt, you were guilty in London."

"Luckily, I did not remain long enough to scandalise them very materially. My departure was hastened by a singular *contretemps*—the arrival, one fine morning, of our hereditary prince at the very hotel where I had taken up my abode under my assumed name. You may be sure I thought every minute an hour till I got safe out of the house, and found myself travelling, at a brisk rate, on the road to Dover."

"Having left your heart behind you, as I said before," said Bürckenthal; "so you may as well let us into the secret at once."

"There is no secret to confide, my dear Bürckenthal; but I will acknowledge that I *had* an adventure, such as it was; and though I did not lose my heart, many a wiser man has availed himself of a less plausible pretext for doing so."

“*À merveille !*” exclaimed Gernonville ; “ we have caught him at last in a communicative mood. *Allez toujours, mon cher.*”

“ I travelled from Paris to London with my friend Eugène de Salaberry, who was attached to the French embassy there ; and, indeed, it was chiefly at his instigation I resolved on the trip, as he promised to enact *cicerone*, and obviate the necessity of my coming in contact with any of the diplomatic authorities from this part of the world, through whom my secret might have transpired. Accordingly, he did his duty as bear-leader, and we visited the theatres, the promenades, and most of the public places together. I found it pleasant enough ; for the weather was fine, the court residing in London, the town full of beautiful women and gay company, and my acquaintance with the language quite sufficient for all purposes either of pleasure or business. About three days after my arrival, there was a grand review of the Guards in Hyde Park, to which, as you may suppose, I made it a point to go ; and, accompanied by Eugène, whose uniform served as a passport through the *cordon* of dragoons employed to keep the ground, I joined the brilliant party of equestrians that followed in the train of the Maréchal de Wellington and his staff. There were several ladies in the cavalcade—most of them young and handsome, all dressed *en amazone*, and managing their fiery steeds with much grace and dexterity. But there was one

whose extreme loveliness at once arrested my gaze, and, notwithstanding my enthusiasm for military affairs, completely withdrew my attention from the manœuvres of the troops, which were nevertheless, I believe, very perfect in their way. She was a *blonde* of that peculiar and exquisite fairness which is, perhaps, only to be seen in England; but of which, either there or elsewhere, I never beheld so perfect a specimen. I question whether the most fastidious critic could have detected a fault either in the classical, though delicate outline of her features, or the general *contour* of the face. But of this I am certain, that the expression of angelic sweetness which pervaded her countenance, and the look of graceful and captivating timidity that beamed from her soft blue eyes, were such as to disarm all criticism, and set even envy at defiance."

"Bravo!" exclaimed Gernonville; "and the enthusiast who describes a fair lady in such glowing terms has the assurance to tell us that he is not in love!"

"If you were a judge of these matters," answered Altendorf, "you would perceive that I am too accurate and minute in my description for a genuine *amoureux*. But you must not interrupt me by such irrelevant remarks. To resume my tale, however, the fair unknown was habited very much like the other ladies on the ground, except that, instead of the man's hat usually worn by female equestrians in England, she had a black

toque, or *chapeau à la Henri Quatre*, or something of the kind—for I am no accurate observer of millinery—with a plume of ostrich feathers; and from underneath this becoming head-dress, her fair and silken hair fell on her delicate cheek in the most bewitching ringlets. The horse she rode was, at least in appearance, worthy of the lovely burden he bore. But he was probably unused to the clang of arms, or the sound of martial music; for he was evidently very fidgety,—ever and anon snorting violently, pawing the ground with great vehemence, and exhibiting various other signs of restlessness, which might have alarmed a more timid horsewoman. She, however, sat with great composure, occasionally patting his neck with the fairest and prettiest hand in the world, and honouring him with sundry little flattering marks of *bienveillance*, which, had he not been the most ungrateful, as well as the most senseless brute in the world, must at once have soothed him into good humour. But all to no purpose; the moment the firing commenced he became perfectly unmanageable; and, after rearing and plunging for a few seconds in a frightful manner, he darted off at full speed, before any of her party had time to secure his rein, and carried her, though rather in an oblique direction, towards the column of troops that were drawn up in line across the park. More than one horseman, from among the spectators, rushed forward to her assistance, and I among the rest. It happened that at the moment

the young lady's horse started off, I was at some little distance from the spot where she had been standing, and on the side to which the animal's course inclined. This gave me a decided advantage in the pursuit; and as the horse I rode was a remarkably fleet one, and I had a shorter space to traverse in order to reach that point of the line towards which she seemed likely to be carried, I contrived, by dint of whip and spur, to come up with her just as she had arrived within a few feet of the column of troops, into the midst of which the frightened animal would inevitably have carried her; and God knows what might have happened! But, by the greatest and most fortunate chance in the world, I managed to seize the rein, and thus not only checked the speed of her courser, but made him glance off to the right, instead of going straight forward. The jerk, however, was so violent that it pulled me out of the saddle, and I fell to the ground. But, *diable!* there is the palace clock striking seven: I must be off directly."

"And leave us in uncertainty about the result? Why need you be in such a hurry?"

"*Mon cher*, you know his highness goes to the Opera to-night, and I am on the guard of honour. I have not a moment to lose. You must wait till some more favourable opportunity for the rest of my story."

II.

The Opera-house at Conradsburgh presented on

that evening an unusually brilliant appearance. The arrival of a celebrated *cantatrice* from Vienna had attracted to the theatre the *élite* of the court and city ; and his serene highness the Margrave in person, with a gracious smile on his broad, fair, fat face, and bearing on his ample chest the insignia of the Green Eagle and the Golden Gridiron, took his station at an early hour in the front of his box, accompanied by his august sister, the Princess Christine, and attended by the chief officers of his household.

It was altogether a very lively and agreeable scene : and although an *habitué* of the King's Theatre might have missed the bright jewels and brighter eyes that dart their rays in such dazzling effulgence from every point of that splendid temple of the muses and graces,—although the “perfumed gale” spoke rather too intelligibly of cigars,—still, nobody but a cynic could have found fault with so well-behaved, courteous, and good-humoured an audience. Moreover, to those who are “special about pedigrees,” it would have been highly satisfactory to know that all the deficiencies of the present were amply compensated by the splendours of the past ; and that the restricted *enceinte* of that small, ill-lighted, and humbly-decorated *salle*, contained four times the number of *familles chapitrales* that are to be found in the peerage of the three kingdoms.

On the stage, too, there was little ground for

criticism. The opera was *Fidelio*; and the music of Beethoven, respectably executed by a German company, was, as might be expected, listened to with due reverence and attention by a German audience. But in the interval between the acts, the appearance of two strangers, a lady and a gentleman, in a hitherto untenanted box, directly opposite to that of the margrave, attracted the notice of the house to a degree that threatened to effect a diversion from the legitimate object of interest in so musical a community.

The margrave had, as became a sovereign prince, the perfect use of all his faculties. He had penetrating eyes, ever-open ears, and a never-failing memory. His serene highness was particularly well acquainted with the face, figure, and air,—birth, parentage, and education,—life, character, and behaviour, of at least one-third of the audience. There was scarcely a cross or a riband among the occupants of the principal tier which had not been bestowed by his own august hand; or a fair cheek throughout the same section of the assembly which had not been pressed,—in all honour and propriety, of course,—by his own serene lips. A single *coup-d'œil*, without the assistance of his glass, satisfied his serene highness that the new arrivals were strangers, foreigners, and people of condition; and no sooner had he brought his double-barrelled *lorgnette* to bear upon the subject, than he was impressed with the conviction, that the lady was one

of the most lovely creatures whom he had ever beheld.

“Upon this hint he spake;” and turning to his principal chamberlain, who stood erect and motionless behind his highness’s chair—the living impersonation of courtly ceremony and rigid *étiquette*—he inquired: “Monsieur de Steifenbach, who are those people opposite, in Countess Karsveldt’s box? The lady is really very pretty—very!”

“His excellency Count Steifenbach-Lohenbäuen, Grand Cross of the Green Eagle, Commander of the Golden Gridiron, First Chamberlain, &c., felt very much like an almanac that has overlooked an eclipse; and his countenance assumed an aspect of the most profound humility and mortification as he hesitatingly acknowledged his ignorance respecting the parties in question.

“Ah, çà! Monsieur de Stahlemborg,” resumed his highness, addressing the master of the horse, “then perhaps you can inform us?”

But the majesty of the stable was as completely at fault as the genius of the drawing-room; and the inquiry was successively transferred from the master of the horse to the comptroller of the household, from the comptroller of the household to the principal aide-de-camp on duty, and, finally, from him to the page of honour in waiting.

Now this important functionary had chanced to witness the arrival of the dark britska and its occupants at the Hôtel de l’Empire, and he shrewdly

conjectured that the distinguished strangers who now graced the Countess Karsveldt's box were no other than the travellers in question.

But a courtier is no more at liberty to volunteer information than a ghost; and the young gentleman was sufficiently skilled in the rudiments of his profession to be fully impressed with the importance of that maxim. He therefore waited very quietly until the margrave's inquiry, unsuccessfully addressed to all the principal officers of state who were present, had descended in legitimate gradation, and, as it were, *en ricochet*, to him. He then stated the amount of his knowledge or conjectures in the matter, adding, that he understood the new arrivals were English.

"English!" exclaimed the margrave; "so much the better! The subjects of my illustrious cousin of England are always most welcome to Conradsburgh; and we should be really ungrateful if we could forget the very kind attentions which his Britannic Majesty was so good as to bestow on the hereditary prince, when his serene highness visited London last year. Upon my word, the lady is really very handsome, and has certainly a most distinguished air; evidently a person of high rank, I should say, by her *tournure*. "*N'est-ce pas, Christine?*" continued he, addressing his sister.

Her serene highness the Princess Christine-Wilhelmine-Léopoldine-Marie-Thérèse was as blind as a buzzard; but she knew that in all well-regulated

states it is the duty of a subject to be of the same opinion as his sovereign, and, as the second subject of the realm, it was her especial duty to set a good example in that particular. She therefore eagerly assented to the observation of her august brother, although the age, sex, and figure of the couple in the opposite box were, as far as her view of them was concerned, as doubtful as if they had been ten miles off.

"She is unquestionably one of the most striking persons I have seen for an age," continued the margrave; "and I should like very much to learn who she is. But stay—of course our good friend Mr. Fitz-Tyms will know every thing concerning these strangers: is he in the house?"

"His excellency is at his usual post in Madame de Flirtenstein's box, may it please your highness," answered the master of the horse.

"*Monsieur le Grand Écuyer*" observed his highness, with a frown on his brow, "I trust the Baroness de Flirtenstein knows better what is due to herself and us, than to compromise her reputation in society, and, what is more, endanger her reception at court, by justly exposing herself to such observations, which, allow me to observe, are rather *déplacées* on an occasion like the present.

So saying, his highness gave his mustachios an energetic twist; and the Princess Christine, sympathetically affected, bridled her chin, and agitated her fan with corresponding vehemence.

The rebuked and conscience-stricken Stahleberg was silent. But the margrave having, for the sake of appearances, entered his protest, immediately relapsed into his usual good-humour.

“Well,” said he, “if Monsieur de Fitz-Tyms is in the theatre, his excellency will, no doubt, ascertain the point, and satisfy our curiosity concerning his very interesting *compatriote*. Have the goodness, Monsieur de Stahleberg, to request that he will favour us with his presence for a few minutes.”

To hear was of course to obey; and, after a very brief interval, Monsieur de Stahleberg re-entered the margrave’s box, accompanied by Mr. Fitz-Tyms, the British resident.

Mr. Fitz-Tyms was a very great man in his own opinion; nor could he have entertained a higher notion of his importance, as the representative of his Britannic Majesty, had he been ambassador at Paris or Vienna. He was well pleased to be referred to on this, or on any other occasion; and it was with much self-complacency that he declared himself qualified to give a satisfactory answer to the inquiries of his serene highness. He was enabled to state, on the authority of a particularly strong letter of introduction from the British embassy at Paris, received that evening, that the strangers who had attracted so much notice were an English gentleman of the name of Mordaunt, and his daughter—that they were persons of family and consequence

visiting Conradsburgh on urgent private affairs—and that he had been requested to pay them every attention in his power.

“ *C'est bon,*” said the margrave; “we must also perform our duty to such distinguished guests. Monsieur de Steifenbach, your excellency will have the goodness to invite Mr. and Mademoiselle Mordaunt to the court ball to-morrow.”

III.

“Provoking!” exclaimed Mr. Mordaunt, as he inspected the contents of a packet which was delivered to him the next morning, while he sat at breakfast with his daughter.

“What is the matter, papa?” inquired the young lady, rather startled by the look and gesture of impatience which accompanied her father’s exclamation.

“This comes of humouring you by going to the Opera last night, Edith!”

“Well, papa,” said Edith, “surely nothing very dreadful has resulted from my betraying you into so reprehensible a proceeding?”

“What do you call this?” said Mr. M., handing her the note.

“Really! an invitation to the court ball, this evening! How very polite of the margrave!”

“I wish he had kept his politeness to himself,” said the father. “It is too bad to be annoyed in this way wherever one goes.”

“ Shocking, indeed !” said Edith, laughing.
“ But what is to be done, dear papa ?”

“ No difficulty about that. We can easily send an excuse.”

“ Impossible, papa ! An invitation from a sovereign prince !”

“ A sovereign fiddlestick ! You can be ill, you know.”

“ Thank you, papa ; but, if you please, I had rather not.”

“ So you really wish to go to this ball, Edith ?”

“ Why, to say the truth, papa, I think I *should* like it. What I saw of the good people of Conradsburgh last night at the Opera makes me somewhat desirous of improving my acquaintance with them ; — that is, if you have no serious objection.”

“ And do you really think, Edith,” said her father, gravely, “ that I am altogether fit to mingle in these gaieties just at present ? Knowing, as you do, the very painful and agitating business that brings me to this place, are you surprised that I should wish for a little retirement, at least until I have ascertained certain facts that interest me so deeply ?”

“ By no means, dear papa,” said Edith, drawing close to her father’s chair, and leaning affectionately on his shoulder. “ I would not have you annoy or inconvenience yourself in the slightest degree ; and if it would be really distressing to you ——”

“ Why, certainly,” said he, looking at her with

admiration, and playfully parting the ringlets on her fair forehead, "you *did* look very pretty last night, Edith; and I was fool enough to feel very proud of you. It is no wonder that you should wish for a repetition of the homage which was paid to you by the eyes of all around you."

"Oh!" exclaimed Edith, laughing, and blushing most becomingly, "if you put it upon that footing, *padre*, I shall not say a word more."

"I dare say not," said he, patting her cheek; "because you see that you have carried your point. Well, well, Edith, you are a spoiled child, and a cunning gipsy; and it is written that you are to make a fool of me as often as you please. We will obey the commands of his serene highness."

"Thank you a thousand times, dear papa!" said Edith; "I am afraid you think me sadly addicted to the vanities of this wicked world. But you must consider that I have had a long fast from balls. I have positively not had a single waltz since the last night of the first subscription."

"You are a perfect martyr!" said Mordaunt, as he rose to leave the room. "But God forbid! my dear girl," added he, more seriously, "that I should find fault with a love for innocent enjoyment, so natural at your age. On the contrary, may you long retain the joyousness of spirit—the lightness of heart, that makes your presence act like a gleam of sunshine upon me at all times, let my mind be ever so much clouded with care."

Edith was alone ; and she remained for a minute or two buried in thought. A shade passed over her countenance, and she leaned her forehead upon her hand.

“ Heigho ! ” exclaimed she at length. “ My heart is not always *quite* so light as papa imagines, I fear ! ”

IV.

A murmur of applause and admiration, subdued to the legitimate pitch which became so courtly a scene, ran through the brilliant circle, as the lovely Edith Mordaunt, conducted with marked deference by the first chamberlain, was presented to his serene highness the margrave on the evening of the ball.

Never had she appeared so surpassingly beautiful. Her slight but exquisitely formed figure was exhibited to the best advantage in a robe of white satin ; and the single *aigrette* of brilliants, which formed the sole ornament of her hair, was not sufficient to detract from that simplicity of toilette which accorded best with the sylph-like character of her beauty.

The margrave, having imprinted a kiss on her fair cheek, and paid his compliments to her in very good French, presented her in the most gracious manner to the Princess Christine, who was equally polite and cordial in her reception of *la belle Anglaise* ; and, to complete the triumph of the moment,

the hereditary prince himself, "the glass of fashion and the mould of form," selected her, with becoming condescension, as his partner in the first polonaise.

The ball, as might be expected, was a very splendid affair; the room magnificent in size and decoration, the company gracious in manners and gorgeous in costume, and the orchestra as satisfactory as it could be to the fastidious ears of a Londoner, in the inevitable absence of Weippert and Collinet. But had all the *accessoire* of the *fête* been less correct in taste and style, Edith was in no mood for criticism. She had the true spirit of enjoyment, which prompts its possessor on such occasions to pass over what is deficient, and dwell with gratification on the favourable side of things. No wonder that she viewed every object through a rose-coloured medium; she saw the light of her own joyous temper and angelic disposition reflected in the countenances of all around her; for good-humour, reversing the fabled attribute of the chameleon, communicates its own peculiar hue to every thing with which it comes in contact. The havoc that she committed among the hearts of the Conradsburgh *merveilleux* was dreadful, as at every glance of her soft blue eye she annihilated some sentimental youth with an interminable pedigree and an unpronounceable name. But wholly unconscious of the effect which her beauty produced on the assembly, she glided placidly through the dance, as innocent of the devastation that waited on

her path, as the image of Juggernaut while his awful chariot-wheels roll majestically over the crackling limbs of his devoted worshippers !

The first waltz was at an end, and the grand écuyer, M. de Stahleberg, who had been the fortunate partner of her gyrations, had just conducted the lovely Englishwoman to a seat near her father, when, in the midst of some lively observation which she was addressing to the latter on the brilliant scene before her, she stopped suddenly—her eyes seemed fixed, with a look of eagerness and astonishment, on some object at the other side of the room ; and she turned as pale as death.

“ For Heaven’s sake, Edith ! ” inquired Mr. Mordaunt, in great surprise and almost in alarm,—“ what is the matter ? Are you ill ? ”

But the paleness was momentary. The bright glow by which it was immediately succeeded, diffusing itself rapidly over her face, and, we regret to say—for it is not becoming—her neck, soon removed the apprehensions of the anxious father, without, however, satisfying his curiosity. The mystery was partly explained when a young man of the most prepossessing and distinguished appearance, in the uniform of his serene highness’s body-guard, made his way through the crowd to the spot where Miss Mordaunt was sitting ; and, with an exclamation of delighted surprise, addressed her by her name.

Edith rose from her seat, with an agitated look

and manner for which her father could no more account than for the recognition of his daughter by the handsome stranger; and, yielding to an impulse which, as will hereafter be seen, the circumstances fully justified, she held out her hand to him in the most frank and cordial manner.

“ *Bon Dieu ! Mademoiselle de Mordaunt ! Vous ici ! Quel bonheur inespéré !* ” exclaimed he, as he seized her hand eagerly between both of his, and with difficulty refrained from pressing it to his lips.

This completed the measure of Mr. Mordaunt’s amazement; and he was about to apply to his daughter for a solution of the enigma, when he was summoned by his excellency the first chamberlain, to attend the margrave, who had expressed a complimentary wish that his distinguished English guest would assist in making up his *partie de wisk*.

“ *Il fallut passer par-là !* ” With well-feigned alacrity, and real reluctance, he walked off to the card-table, while the gallant guardsman led off Edith, in the opposite direction, to join the *quadrille*.

In the mean time, the young people, to whom their unexpected *rencontre* was evidently a source of gratification, far beyond what the recognition in society of a casual acquaintance could produce, took their places in the quadrille; and while, wholly engrossed by the interest of the meeting, they merely went through the form of dancing, regardless of what was passing around them, their *pré-occupation* was not unobserved by some of the

spectators who had witnessed the progress of the affair.

“ *Parlez moi de ça !* ” exclaimed Gernonville, addressing Bürckenthal. “ Did you observe the air with which our friend Fritz carried off *la belle Anglaise ?* ”

“ Curse his impudence ! ” said Bürckenthal. “ Without even an introduction ! ”

“ Impossible ! ” said Gernonville. “ It is evident that they are old friends. I have it ! — *un trait de lumière !* My life for it, Bürckenthal, this lovely Englishwoman is no other than the heroine of the adventure which he related to us yesterday. You recollect his description : fair complexion — blue eyes — silken ringlets, and so forth ! This is *impayable !* ”

Gernonville was not mistaken. Edith *was* the heroine of that adventure ; and as the military duties of our friend Altendorf had prevented him from satisfying the curiosity of his companions, by relating the result, we may here as well supply the deficiency, for the benefit of the reader.

When Friedrich von Altendorf, as he has stated, was dragged off his horse, on the occasion referred to, he came to the ground with such violence that he remained for several minutes insensible. His effort had, however, been successful in checking Miss Mordaunt's frightened steed ; and, some of her party riding up in time to secure it, the interest of the scene was quickly transferred to the adven-

turous stranger, who had so gallantly preserved our heroine, at the imminent risk of his own life. Fortunately, he had sustained no injury beyond a few slight bruises ; and when he found himself placed in the *calèche* of Mrs. Harleigh,—an aunt of Miss Mordaunt's, with whom she was staying on a visit,—and conveyed to his hotel, in the company of both ladies, who expressed the warmest gratitude for his services, and the most anxious solicitude for his welfare,—his trifling mischance ceased to be matter of regret ; and he felt very desirous to avail himself of Mrs. Harleigh's pressing invitation to her house, which, having been assured of his respectability by Monsieur de Salaberry, that lady had not hesitated to give him.

Accordingly, the next day, although rather stiff and lame, he felt himself sufficiently recovered to call in Berkeley Square, where his reception by both ladies was such as induced him to repeat his visit on the morrow ; and such was the effect of Edith's great beauty and winning sweetness of manner, combined with the somewhat romantic circumstances in which the acquaintance had originated, that our friend Fritz was in a fair way of surrendering his heart unconditionally to the lovely Englishwoman, when the arrival of the hereditary prince obliged him, as the reader is aware, to leave London at a very short notice.

He had had neither time nor opportunity to apprise his new friends of his approaching departure ;

and Edith, who was not wholly uninterested in the subject, was obliged to content herself with a polite message, delivered by Monsieur de Salaberry, who stated that his friend, M. de Rollestein, had been suddenly recalled to the continent on particular business. She was thus left in complete ignorance respecting him, as he had not even mentioned the part of Germany where his family resided ; and they had not met since.

Whether she had ever occupied herself in the interval by forming conjectures on the subject of her gallant deliverer, or indulged in hopes of meeting him again, we are of course unable to ascertain : nor would it, perhaps, be discreet to inquire ; but we may venture so far as to say that her surprise on discovering him as an *habitué* of the court of Conradsburgh was not connected with any feelings of a very unpleasant character.

Our limits will not allow us to detail the conversation of—the lovers, we had almost said. It must suffice to state, that the moments flew rapidly with our friend Edith, and that Altendorf felt in higher spirits than he had been since his visit to England.

We are almost ashamed to mention how often they waltzed together ; so we shall say nothing about it, lest we offend the *rigorisme* of some worthy *chaperons*, and be ourselves honoured with a place in the *index expurgatorius à l'usage des mamans*, when, should death and matrimony spare us in the

interim, we make our bachelor appearance "about town" next season.

But Mr. Mordaunt, being at length liberated from his post at the card-table, came in search of his daughter, and announced to her that the hour for departure had arrived. As they passed through the ante-chamber on their way out, Mr. Mordaunt was just beginning—"And pray, Edith, who *is* your military friend?" when they again encountered Altendorf.

"What! going so early!" said he, in English. "Pray, stay half an hour longer."

"Excuse me, sir," said Mordaunt, rather drily; "my daughter is not accustomed to late hours."

"Papa!" saith Edith, "allow me to have the pleasure of introducing to you a gentleman to whom I am under the deepest obligations. This is M. de Rolleston, who, as you are aware, saved me from what might have been a fatal accident, at the review, last summer, when I was staying with my aunt Harleigh."

"Good God! my dear sir," exclaimed Mordaunt, seizing him cordially by the hand, "I am rejoiced to meet you. I have long been anxiously desirous to express my heartfelt gratitude to one who has rendered me the most important service which can be conferred on a father; and although I have not yet had it in my power to evince my sense of your gallant conduct in rescuing my only child from a most dangerous situation, I can assure

you that it has not been for want of efforts on my part to ascertain your place of abode; but, although I made the most particular inquiries, I never could obtain the slightest information concerning you. And your friend, M. de Salaberry had been, I believe, transferred to some continental mission, before I returned from abroad."

"The fact is," said Friedrich, with some embarrassment, "I must acknowledge to you, my dear sir, that there was a very sufficient reason for your not discovering the place of my residence. The name which I bore in England was not my own. But, however startling such an admission may seem, I trust you will believe me, when I say that my motive for concealment was not a dishonourable one. It no longer exists, however; and if I was fortunate enough to be honoured with your good wishes under the name of Rolleston, I trust I shall not be considered less worthy of your *bienveillance* as Friedrich von Altendorf."

"Altendorf!" exclaimed Mordaunt, in a voice of astonishment, not unmixed with emotion, "Good God! how extraordinary!" and the lovely Edith echoed "Altendorf!" in a tone of equal amazement.

But the ante-chamber was fast filling with people on their way out; and Mordaunt saw that it was no longer a fitting *local* for explanations of any kind.

"Monsieur d'Altendorf," said he, hurriedly, "I have much to say to you, but it cannot be said here; to-morrow, if you will allow me to call upon

you, I may explain. Have the goodness to let me know where you are to be found, and whether you can receive me at three o'clock?"

"Most willingly, sir," answered the astonished Altendorf, with joyful alacrity, as he gave his address; and, having escorted Miss Mordaunt to her carriage, he took his leave for the night.

V.

In a small but cheerful and neatly furnished room, which opened on the quiet and secluded garden of the Carmelite convent, sat a lady of a certain age, in the deepest mourning, busily employed over her embroidery frame. Although, strictly speaking, an inhabitant of the cloister, the form of her dress shewed that she was not bound by any monastic engagement. In fact, the baroness, for such was her rank, had merely taken up her abode under the roof of the pious sisterhood, from a wish for retirement, which her restricted means and certain domestic afflictions had, for the present, combined to render desirable. Her aspect was mild and engaging; and, in spite of the lines with which time and care had intersected a once beautiful countenance, she might still be considered handsome.

"A stranger wishes to be admitted to Madame la Baronne," said a lay sister, entering the apartment.

"I had rather not see any body this morning," said the baroness; "I am not very well."

"It is the same person who came yesterday,

and was so urgent to see you, when you were lying down, Madame. I have asked him his name, but he refuses to tell me."

"Indeed! but what sort of person is he, Katherine?"

"He is an elderly man, with a very noble air," answered the servant.

"Well—you may admit him."

Katherine left the room, and immediately re-entered, ushering in a stranger, whose appearance was in perfect accordance with her description.

The exemplary Katherine, although the inmate of a convent, had not quite overcome the original sin of curiosity inherent in her sex. She therefore lingered in the room as long as possible, under pretence of setting chairs, drawing down window-blinds, advancing footstools, &c.; but in the anxious hope of ascertaining the object of the mysterious stranger's visit to Madame la Baronne.

But he seemed by no means desirous to enlighten her on the subject. He followed all her movements with an impatient eye, and at length, in a peremptory tone, requested the favour of her immediate absence.

Thus directly appealed to, she could not refuse to depart. But she retired with a very ill grace; and, muttering a German interjection equivalent to the English, "Marry, come up!" she slammed the door after her.

The stranger stood for a few moments, motionless and statue-like, near the door, gazing intently

on the countenance of the Baroness, who was a good deal embarrassed, and perhaps a little alarmed, at this species of scrutiny, on the part of one who did not seem particularly well acquainted with the usages of society—for he kept on his hat. At length, perceiving that he had no intention of beginning the conversation, she addressed him in French.

“ May I request to know, sir,” said she, mildly, “ what has procured me the honour of this visit ? ”

“ Good God ! ” said the stranger, in English, at the same time removing his hat. “ Julia ! ” continued he, in a voice almost inarticulate from emotion, “ is it possible that you do not know me ? ”

“ Merciful Heaven ! — That voice ! ” exclaimed the baroness, starting up from her chair and clasping her hands. “ Can it be ? — It is — it is Augustus ! ” and rushing towards the stranger, she threw herself into his arms in an agony of tears.

“ My sister ! — my own, my beloved sister ! ” continued Mordaunt (for it was he), as he pressed her to his heart, while the tears rolled down his cheeks, “ why — why have I been thus left for years in ignorance of your fate ? ”

“ Oh, Augustus ! ” sobbed the baroness, “ it was not my fault ; I had no choice — I was bound to obey my husband ; and you know too well whether he had cause for resentment.”

“ I admit it,” said Mordaunt, “ against my father—but not against *me* ! Heaven is my witness, that I left no means untried to appease his

anger; and had not my military duties detained me for years abroad, I can scarcely doubt that my earnest entreaties would at length have prevailed."

"It is even so, then!" said the baroness, while her countenance assumed a death-like paleness—"My father . . ."

Mordaunt spoke not; but he cast a look on his black dress, which was sufficiently expressive.

"Great God!" exclaimed the baroness, giving vent to a fresh burst of sorrow. "And he has died without one word of forgiveness to his child!"

"Not so, dearest Julia!" answered Mordaunt, deeply affected; "he relented at last; too late, indeed, for his own happiness; but time enough, I trust, for your consolation. This locket—you will remember it—it contains the hair of our mother, and till the day of his death it never left his breast—he commissioned me to deliver to you, in token of pardon and reconciliation. His blessing, too, accompanied it."

"Heaven be praised!" ejaculated the baroness, as, with streaming eyes, she knelt to receive the tardy pledge of forgiveness for an offence which had been more than expiated by a long estrangement from her paternal home and her native country.

Two-and-twenty years had elapsed since Julia Wrottesley, at the age of eighteen, condemned by a worldly father to bestow her hand on a wealthy and titled suitor whose age and character but ill accorded with her own, had sought refuge in flight,

to become the wife of a young officer in the King's German Legion, who was every way calculated to win, as well as to deserve, the youthful affection of beauty and innocence. But to the haughty and imperious Lord Wrottesley, the noble birth, engaging manners, and generous disposition of his son-in-law, afforded no palliation of his poverty, and no excuse for his presumption. Conscious that his own parental tyranny had been the cause, if not the justification of his daughter's elopement, he remained all the more obdurate from the irritation of self-reproach; and when, on the termination of the continental war, the young couple, whose means were sadly diminished by the disbanding of his Majesty's foreign troops, made the most submissive overtures of reconciliation, Lord Wrottesley accompanied his refusal of assistance with a declaration of such unrelenting anger towards his daughter, and such insulting expressions of contempt towards the person, the character, and the country of his son-in-law, that the proud German—who acknowledged no inferiority in point of birth, and could still less brook the slightest insinuation against his spotless honour—became exasperated in his turn; and, vowing that he would never lay himself under the shadow of an obligation to any of his wife's relations, he peremptorily forbade her to hold, henceforward, any communication whatsoever with her family. Some real or imaginary injustice, also, which he had experienced in his military capacity, at the hands of the

British government, combined with the insulting conduct of his father-in-law to inspire him with a general hostility to England; and although his affection for his lovely and amiable wife remained unimpaired, his rancorous feelings towards her country and her family increased to such a degree, that at length he would not suffer the slightest allusion to be made in his presence to either. Having sold out of the British service, he retired to a very small estate which he possessed in Hanover; upon which he lived for several years in circumstances of great privation, bordering on positive want. Chance, however, brought him into contact with the Margrave of —, to whom he was fortunate enough to render some slight service, in the way of hospitality, during a tour which his serene highness was making *incog.* through Hanover. The consequence was his establishment, shortly after, in a post of honour and emolument at his serene highness's court; and he continued from that time to reside at Conradsburgh, in comparative affluence, until his death, which occurred a few months previous to the period of our narrative.

Mordaunt had passed the interval in the active duties of a soldier's life; and a residence of fifteen years as governor and commander of the forces in one of our principal colonies, had prevented his making those personal efforts to obtain tidings of his lost sister which his strong affection for her prompted. He had, however, been recalled to England by the last illness of his father; and as soon as his affairs

allowed, after the death of Lord Wrottesley, he had started for the continent, in the hope of at length ascertaining her fate. At Paris he accidentally met with an officer who had formerly served in the same regiment with his brother-in-law, and who stated that he had seen his old comrade, a year before, at the court of Conradsburgh.

On receiving this intelligence Lord Wrottesley determined to proceed immediately to that city ; but being uncertain as to the reception he was likely to meet with should the baron be apprised beforehand of his arrival, and anxious, in visiting Conradsburgh on private affairs of so painful a nature, to attract as little public notice as possible, he thought it advisable to conceal his rank. In his passport, therefore, and in the diplomatic introduction which he had obtained at Paris with a view of assisting his inquiries, he was designated as Mr. Mordaunt, a name which, in fact, he had legally assumed on receiving a large fortune through his late wife, but which he had reason to believe would not be recognised at Conradsburgh.

It is impossible for us to lay before our readers the particulars of a conversation, in which the hopes and fears, the joys and griefs, of twenty years were to be discussed, explained, commented on, between the brother and sister.

“Dearest Julia !” said Lord Wrottesley, “henceforward your sorrows are at an end. We have met, at length, I trust, never to part ; and if you can

make up your mind to return to England, we may hope that the future may compensate for the past. By my father's will you are already in possession of competence; but all I have shall also be yours. My house, as my heart, shall be open to you."

"I would willingly revisit the scenes of my youth," said the baroness, "more especially now that the loss of my beloved husband—my noble Albert! has filled this place with sad and bitter recollections; but I have a son, on whom my movements must depend—the image of his father—the consolation of all my grief—the joy and pride of my widowed heart. There lives not a more gallant spirit, or a more dutiful child. I cannot part from him, Wrottesley!"

"You need not be separated," said Wrottesley; "your son shall be my son; for, alas! my own noble boy followed his mother to an early grave. But I have still a daughter—one, too, whose matchless beauty is her least charm in the eyes of her adoring father. She is under this roof at this moment; but as I wished that no one should be a witness of our first meeting, I left her in the ante-chamber to await your summons."

"Where—where is she?" said the Baroness, starting up—"I long to press her to my heart!"

Wrottesley threw open the door, and in one moment the lovely Edith was folded in the embrace of her aunt.

But ere the three had time to recover in any

degree from the emotion inseparable from such a meeting, the door re-opened, and Friedrich von Altendorf stood before them.

If his astonishment was great on observing who were the inmates of his mother's apartment, his delight was far greater when he discovered that the lovely girl whose image had so long taken possession of his heart—she whom he had rescued from danger—perhaps from death—was no other than his own cousin—the only child of his uncle, Lord Wrottesley.

We shall not attempt to describe the scene which ensued. It was one of unmingled joy to Friedrich—of deep but pleasurable emotion to all. But the result may be easily conjectured—and our limits warn us that it must be told in few words.

The whole party set off together, and as soon as possible, for England. The baroness has taken up her permanent abode with her brother, Lord Wrottesley, who, taught by the sad experience of his family, and powerfully impressed by Altendorf's claims on his gratitude, has cheerfully resigned whatever ambitious views he might have entertained for the establishment of his lovely and wealthy heiress, and suffered her to bestow her hand on her cousin. It only remains for us to say, that the noble qualities of Friedrich von Altendorf, and his exemplary conduct as a husband, a son, and a nephew, afford ample compensation to his devoted wife and a generous father-in-law for every deficiency of worldly advantage in his alliance.

MRS. KNOWLYS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE HELIOTROPE."

THOUGH gone the days when smiles rewarded
Each deed achieved in glory's cause,
When all that gallant knight regarded
Were honour's badge and love's applause !
Yet deem not Beauty's sway departed—
As *then* she reigned she reigneth *now* !
Still at her shrine the martial-hearted
And minstrel knights in homage bow.

And here—though not in feudal pluming,
Is theme for troubadour to sing ;
An eye as bright, a cheek as blooming
As ever shone on knightly ring !
Ladye ! for looks like those thou wearest,
How many belted knights have bled !
To beauty, such as that thou bearest,
What votive incense hath been shed !

Even I, who largely have partaken
Of age, with age's maxims stored,
Must cease to look, ere looks awaken
Those dreams that ill with age accord :



For else, not aught hath time revealed me,—
Nor aught that age or art supplies,
Could furnish one resource to shield me
Beneath the fiat of such eyes !

But threescore years have made me fearless ;
So now, with Plato for my guest,—
Light be thy heart ! thy cheek as tearless
As those could wish who love thee best !
For better harps thy name is chosen :
Enough for me if, in its beam,
The rapture-tide, that eld had frozen,
Has thawed in homage to my theme !

MY SECOND LOVE.

BY LEITCH RITCHIE, ESQ.

THE history of the heart I hold to be very nearly alike in all men. The apparent difference consists in the strength or faintness of the impression made upon the mind by things always the same. All men have their first love, their second love, and their third love; but some men do not know that they have had any, while others imagine that they have had a great many more.

The history of love is like a picture engraven upon a plate of adamant, with inimitable boldness and delicacy, depth and lightness, simplicity and art. But its effect depends mainly upon the *paper* subjected to the impression. The heart of man is like that paper—clouded, spongy, spotted, smooth, hard, coarse, soft, or fine, as it may happen. In some cases the lines appear fairly rendered; in others, they are blotted and confused; in others, they become so faint, on exposure to the air of the world, that they are nearly, or altogether, invisible.

The history of love is divided into three books. The first is like a fairy tale; the second like a poem; the third like a chronicle. The first is the



only one we re-peruse in after-life with unmixed complacency. No matter what may have been the fate of the heroine—the catastrophe of the story—it is associated with all our best and most beautiful feelings; with the spring-time of the heart, when our young bosoms opened like a flower, in an atmosphere of light, and music, and perfume. The recollection of disappointment has no annoyance; the memorials of death bring back no sorrow; we talk of that shadowy past with complacency, even to strangers; it seems as if the fearless, guileless spirit of early life returned with the theme.

The second era of love is very different. At that epoch the world began to mingle with our dreams—the *world*—comprehensive word! including strife, envy, hope, terror, delirious joy, and bitter, burning tears. The history of this period is a secret and a mystery, which in most cases descends with us to the grave. In public we recoil from its associations with terror; in private, they crimson or blanch our cheek at the distance of half a century: yet the narrative would, in general, seem to a listener to be the most common-place imaginable. Alas! it is not the events that give it importance; it is the thoughts—the imaginations—the stirrings, and heavings, and writhings of the wrung spirit amidst the terrible lessons of early experience.

Why do I impose upon myself the task I have now undertaken? It is a question I can hardly answer. I do it by a kind of compulsion, of what

nature I know not. I sought this spot for a very different purpose. It is a small and lonely island of the Seine—lonely although within view of the mighty capital: I am shrouded in a grove of acacias, overtopped by walnut-trees; the outer world is fainting with heat; the fields are deserted; a dull and drowsy murmur rises from the river. Sometimes a leaf stirs behind or above me; sometimes a thin vapour rises from the water, and I turn my eyes upon the phenomenon with a kind of terror. The murmur is filled with voices, the vapour with shadows; the trees, the river, the fields, the far hills, the mighty city, vanish like a dream. Louder—more distinct! Speak! appear! I will confront ye! Look at these grey hairs which you have flung upon a brow yet spared by time! Can you do more?

My father, once a master in the navy, attached himself at length entirely to the merchant service, with the view of making a fortune (which was at that time sometimes done) by private speculations. I know not if it is to him I owe that adventurous and romantic disposition which has made my life a series of struggles. The house, as far back as I can recollect, was filled with the choicest productions of the tropics—fruits, birds, and beasts; and the faces of the foreign sailors, Spanish, Portuguese, African, Indian, as they came to receive their wages, or to present to my mother little articles of luxury, such as limes, tamarinds, or guava, made also a strong impression upon my imagination.

It was determined, however, that I was not to be a sailor; I was rarely permitted to go on board my father's ship; and he abstained as much as possible from speaking in my presence of the vicissitudes of his wandering life. He was not aware that I was in the habit of making stealthily, in a small boat, trips, not so distant indeed, but quite as dangerous as his own! The motive for his conduct may probably be found in the fact, that the merchant service was becoming less *genteel* than heretofore. Formerly, no person under the rank of a gentleman's son could look forward to attaining the command of a ship, in the ordinary course of affairs. Now, the more rational qualification of merit was beginning to be thought of some consequence in all professions, not only at —, but throughout Scotland.

Upon this subject of gentility, which I consider the most paltry and trashy in nature, it is necessary, for the due understanding of the narrative, to say something more.

My father's fortune, like the sea he traversed, was sometimes rough and sometimes smooth. Sometimes he was rich, and sometimes poor; sometimes we kept three servants, sometimes only one—or, at least, one and a half, a woman and a *lassie*. It may be conceived, therefore, that although the rank of the family in the community was permanent, it depended upon circumstances whether or not we pushed ourselves forward among the “genteel peo-

ple." My father, however, had been a ship-captain at the early age of twenty; and he was a high Tory on principle. His oracle was the *Courier*; and he thought "our contemporary, a morning paper" had ever the worst of it. All this was in his favour—few families in the place could look back to gentility of longer existence. But, alas! he was unlucky. He began to grow old without having made a fortune; while his neighbours built their carriages and palaces, and the little town commenced that career of prosperity which was one day to number it among the great sea-ports of the kingdom.

My father's last voyage was a memorable one both to him and to me—his ship was wrecked, on her return from the West Indies, at the very entrance of the river. The event threw the whole town into commotion. It is impossible to describe the feelings of his own family. First came the vague rumour—"Minute guns heard off the coast—a large vessel, half seen through the fog—supposed to have gone on the rocks;" and then the confirmation—the name—the thousand conjectures as to the number and rank of those who were *lost*! Never before did I feel the full force of that beautiful word by which my countrymen express the fate of those who perish in the deep.

On the evening of the day on which the name of the vessel was ascertained, I reached the fatal spot. The scene was sublime. The storm had spent its fury, and was now moaning heavily along

the sea, which rose in enormous masses upon the cliffs, with a dreary yet majestic uniformity. In the offing, the snow-white foam gave its prevailing colour to the mass, till gradually lost at that distant line where the black and heavy sky met the rim of the ocean. The ship was on her beam-ends, so near the coast that her spars hung over upon the cliffs; and the creaking of her timbers, as the dusky hull was moved by the white waves, seemed to my ear like the convulsive groans of some dying leviathan of the deep.

I saw in an instant that my father was safe; but there was that in his eye, as it rested for a moment upon mine, which forbade me to intrude. He sat upon a rock, issuing his commands through a speaking-trumpet to the sailors, who were employed in easing the ship of her guns and heavy ballast, in the faint hope of getting her to float at the returning tide. Their measured cries, mingling with the last wailings of the storm, added much to the wild effect of the scene. The twilight was far advanced; and here and there a lantern spotted with its dim light the dusky edges of the crags.

This scene ought to me to have been one of unmixed pain. I knew what my father's feelings were at the moment; I had read them in his eye at the first glance; and despair was in his voice, deep, steady, and severe as were the tones of habitual command. This was the end of his travailings by sea and land; this the consummation of a lifetime

spent in danger and hardship! My feelings, notwithstanding, had no touch of pain. There was wonder, admiration—fierce, feverish excitement. I felt as if I was in a dream more precious than a hundred realities. Perhaps the young and romantic will understand me (for no one else can) when I state my conviction, that that hour decided my fate, and made me a wanderer upon the face of the earth!

As it grew darker, I began to be ashamed of my inactivity; and yet I felt that I durst not approach my father till his immediate occupation was finished. There was no human dwelling near the place, but I observed, at a little distance, a rude tent, composed of a sail hung over a stunted tree; and this I rightly conjectured to be the temporary hospital for such of the crew as had been hurt. I immediately walked towards it for the purpose of offering my assistance, but ever and anon turning back to look again upon the strange, wild, *foreign-looking* scene behind me. A fire by this time had been kindled upon the rocks; and the sailors, black, white, and copper-coloured, all naked to the waist, and many with large gold ear-rings, and enormous queues and moustaches, as they flitted to and fro through the smoke, looked like beings of another world.

I was not at that time accustomed to the sight of death, and I felt almost an unmanly horror at the idea of thrusting myself into the presence of the dying or the dead. The tent was as still as a grave. Situated in the lee of a rock, it was protected from

the wind; and as I entered the cold precincts, the silence was so sudden and so deep, that I unconsciously slackened my pace, and crept towards the opening on tiptoe.

As I put aside the canvass, I perceived, by the light of a lantern, that I was indeed entering the house of death. The body of a sailor, which appeared to have been animated by the breath of life not many minutes before, lay upon the ground, decently laid out, and wrapped in a flag by way of winding-sheet. Near it sat a young girl as black as night, leaning her head upon a sea-chest, and buried in profound sleep. I advanced another step, and stood within the tent.

For a moment I was uncertain whether it contained another tenant, either sleeping or dead; but presently, raising her head from a table, on which she had stooped with her face buried in her hands, and throwing aside the hood of a black mantle which enveloped her, a second female appeared. I say *appeared*. The apparition haunts me still. It was a spirit of woman—an *idea* of feminine grace, softness, and beauty. One would think it was nothing more than an idea; for there she stands at this moment before my eyes, as perfect in life and limb as ever! Why is this? What would you *now*? I speak, and you cannot answer me again! I stretch forth my arms, and they clasp only the empty air, painted though it be with beauty, and fragrant with love!

You fancy that there may be (as there commonly is in such cases) some exaggeration in this indefinite portrait? I have thought so too; and I have often endeavoured to separate her in idea from the circumstances in which I first met her. But it is impossible: they are inseparably united. My mind was prepared to receive her.

“ All impulses of soul and sense ”

had lent their aid to fix her, as she then appeared, in my imagination, heart, memory. I gazed on the apparition in silence,—drinking her beauty into my soul in a draught so long and deep that I had no power to speak. I used to laugh at “ love at first sight ; ” and, in most cases, it is a thing to be laughed at. Nevertheless, the coincidence does sometimes happen—like the fulfilment of a dream, for instance—of two beings, adapted by nature, and apparently destined for one another’s love, being sifted from the mass of mankind, and thrown together by the accidents of life. The recognition, when this takes place, is mutual, instantaneous, yet unconscious.

The apparition spoke first.

“ You are a son of Captain —— ? ” said she ;
“ I know you by the eyes.”

“ I am. And you ? ”

“ I am a passenger.”

I looked round the tent. My eye wandered from this radiant creature, and rested on the corpse.

I seemed to be environed by the incongruities of a dream.

“Alas!” said she, shaking her head with an almost childish simplicity, “I did all I could, but he would die!”

She arose, and taking up the lantern, walked across the tent, and looked in the dead man’s face. Her footfall had no perceptible sound; but I found a kind of intoxication steal over me when I felt the waving of the atmosphere as she glided past.

“Poor Gaspar!” said she; “he was a countryman of my own!”

Till this moment I had believed her to be an Englishwoman; but afterwards I detected in her speech that slight foreign accent which is sometimes both touching and beautiful. The next moment, the young negress sprang from her sleep, terrified by a dream, and addressed her mistress by the name of *Donna Antonia*. I was not a boy; but I was not beyond the years when we are slaves to the “magic of a name.” He who cannot conceive the heightening effect of this young girl being a Spaniard, and being called *Donna Antonia*, may shut the book!

Such was my first meeting with *Antonia* —. I might have told the history in a couple of lines, as thus:—“She came to this country a passenger, under my father’s charge; was shipwrecked with him near the entrance of the river, and I conducted her thence to his house.” Were we in every case

to collect the *circumstances*, and examine them in reference to the character of the individual, no action, no train of feelings would appear surprising.

By my father's desire, I carried her home with me that night in a post-chaise. Worn out by terror and fatigue, she fell asleep almost as soon as she entered the vehicle. At midnight she awoke, and for some moments could hardly comprehend her situation.

"I am in Scotland!" she cried at length, bending eagerly out of the window—"Yes, this is Scotland! What a wild, what a beautiful country! That is what you call a glen—there, where the moonlight carries the eye along that far deep vista of rock, and wood, and water. It is my mother's country!" and, throwing herself back in the carriage, she covered her face with her hands.

"What a strange thing it is," said she, again sitting up, "what a strange thing it is to be in Scotland, and in all the wide land to know only a single individual. Captain—— is the only friend I have in Europe!"

"And his son," added I with emotion.

"You are very good; but ought I to call you a friend—yet? Our acquaintance has just commenced!"

"Time has less to do with acquaintanceships than is commonly supposed. I know you better at this moment than, under ordinary circumstances, I should have done in a year. I understand you. I

even think that your face is familiar to me. Do you remember the story in the Arabian Nights, of the man who dipped his head, for a moment, in a basin of water, and in that moment seemed to undergo whole years of adventure and vicissitude? The mind, being eternal, is not subject to the laws of time. I tell you we are already friends!"

"That is really a beautiful fancy," said Antonia, "to whomsoever it may belong; but the odd thing is, I was actually thinking in the tent, that I must have seen you before, and that I remembered the tones of your voice!"

"And so you did!"

"Nay," interrupted she, laughing, "do not stretch your philosophy to extravagance; for I know your mother as well as you. Captain—— is fond of his family, and we quite lived in your Scottish home during the voyage."

In knowledge of the world and of society Antonia was a child; but she had a certain natural elegance of manner which would have carried her through a court. The vulgar imagined her to be high-bred; and the high-bred looked upon her very mistakes as a proof of that breeding which scorns the vulgarity of fashion. She possessed considerable talent; but her fertile mind was only cultivated here and there. A consciousness of power, however, a thirst of knowledge, a longing after excellence, gave glorious promise. We had one taste in common—or rather one passion; and that was a love

of natural scenery. She was a painter by intuition : I was only a rhymester. No matter. She called my verses poetry—and she felt them to be so. They were recited in the lonely glen ; they were accompanied by the murmur of the mountain-stream, or the dash of the distant waterfall ; we were surrounded the while by hills, and woods, and waters ; we were ourselves, our words, our songs, our very figures—a portion of the scene—component parts of the poetry of nature.

Her stay at —— was to be only for a few days, and there could be no harm, therefore, in intrusting her to the guidance of one so well able as myself to shew her the beauties of the neighbourhood. Owing to the absence of her friends, a few days more passed by—a week—two weeks—three weeks. She was then taken away.

I sometimes complain, like other men, of the misfortunes to which my fate or folly has subjected me ; but this is unjust and ungrateful. These three weeks contained happiness enough for any one life. In this happiness there was not a single particle of alloy : there was no thought of the past, no care of the future. We did not talk of love ; we only felt it. We did not dream of marriage ; we knew that we were united in soul, and the idea never entered our hearts that any thing could occur to separate us permanently.

Well—she was taken away by her friends. We had formed no plan for future communication—all

this was to come in the common course of nature and necessity ! I am glad of it. It leaves the era of innocence, confidence, and happiness, uninterrupted. Now we commence a new one. Now the world enters into the scene.

After the loss of his ship, my father's spirits fell, and he determined to go no more to sea. The income of the family was now smaller than ever ; and the sudden abridgement of indulgences to which we had been so long accustomed, forced my attention, in a very disagreeable manner, to the circumstances of our situation. It was time now for me to contribute to the support rather than the burdens of the family ; but this in itself gave me no uneasiness. I was young ; my spirits were elastic ; I thought it was only necessary to put forth my hand upon the riches of the world in order to grasp them. But how this was to be set about—there was the rub. My father had determined that I was to be a foreign merchant ; and *I* had determined that the preliminary time should be spent in a counting-house in the West Indies, rather than in this country. No matter. My absence would not be long ; Antonia's education would be completed by the time of my return ; and——

It is enough to make one smile, to remember that I was a penniless adventurer, and Antonia a rich heiress ! Her property, indeed, was small in the Spanish island ; but her mother's sister, a woman of immense wealth, had invited her over to Scotland,

to take the place of an only child she had just lost. And yet my blindness was not altogether unaccountable; for in my native place I had known nobody above me in point of rank, while the wealthiest inhabitants, only a few years before, had been adventurers like myself.

I began to get anxious, however, as the time approached for active exertion. Antonia was to have written to my mother soon after her arrival at her aunt's house. She did not write. I became discontented—suspicious—angry. At length I wrote to her. The ostensible purpose was to express my mother's fears that she was unwell; but I contrived, and with great ingenuity as I imagined, to introduce such hints as were sure to awaken the most tender associations, while convincing her that my heart was unchanged.

To this letter I received no reply for more than two months. In the interval, the mask dropped, and the world opened before my eyes. "She must think it meanness herself," said I at length, "for such as I to endeavour to obtain the hand of an heiress!" This pitiful, sneaking, dastardly sentiment shews what an apt pupil of society I had become. Nevertheless, I determined not to leave the country till I had heard from her. I refused the offer of a lucrative appointment abroad, and yet still declined going into a counting-house at home. My father was of course violently enraged; but I continued obstinate.

At length the answer came, and it was written in a hurried, almost illegible hand: "Write to me no more. I am ill—miserable. Ignorant of the customs of the country, I am surrounded by terrors. If I could see you!—but no! that is impossible. A gulf is between us, which you cannot pass. Forget me, as you value the happiness of both!"

"*A gulf is between us!*" Docile scholar—as docile as myself! But the discovery makes her wretched? Why, so it does me! She wished to see me?—and I her: it is all in rule. Forsake her—forget her—leave her to happiness and fortune! O woman! woman! Such was my first commentary; and I went immediately to my father, begged his forgiveness, and pledged solemnly my word of honour to accept of the next appointment that was offered to me.

But there was one expression in the note to which my hopes clung in spite of myself. "Ignorant of the customs of the country," said she, "I am surrounded by terrors." What could this mean? Her aunt was a woman of high reputation, and lived in the gay world. In spite of the nonsense we read in novels, a girl even so young as Antonia, if independent in point of fortune, must, to all intents and purposes, be mistress of her own actions. But Antonia was a Spaniard; the customs of *her* country were very different; and the doubt suggested by this point aroused me from that kind of morose despondence into which I had sunk.

Another month passed away; and then we were suddenly surprised by a visit from the young negress, the personal attendant of Antonia. She had come to give her testimony in some law business, which had arisen out of the circumstances of the shipwreck; but for an entire day I felt the agitating conviction that her principal errand was to me. Her manner, I thought, was confused; she seemed disinclined to meet my eye; and I waited, in an agony of impatience, till I could see her alone.

All was delusion; she brought not a line—not even a message. Her appearance, however, associated as it was with the idea of Antonia, had melted me. My pride gave way; and, retiring to my own room, I poured my whole soul into a letter. I spoke of my hopes, my prospects; I prayed for time as eagerly as a malefactor condemned to execution; and, finally, I implored her to allow me to see her before I left the country.

The answer to this letter (forwarded by the negress) was conveyed to me some weeks after, through my father. He informed me that although Miss —— (Donna Antonia) had sold her property in the Spanish island, she had obtained for me an appointment there, through her interest with a house in this country!

“I call upon you,” continued he, “to redeem your word of honour. Do you accept the offer?”

“I do.”

“Then you sail next week; and I would advise

you to set off immediately to make your acknowledgments to Miss ——."

I followed my father's advice. Two days after I found myself in a magnificent mansion at fifty miles distance, and was ushered into the presence of Antonia and her aunt. Antonia rose, blushed, and then grew pale. She half put out her hand, and then allowed it to drop by her side. I advanced steadily.

"Madam," said I, in a voice which I intended to be coldly calm, "I cannot banish myself from this country—in all probability for ever—without returning my acknowledgments for your goodness in obtaining me employment in another climate."

I did not dare to meet her eyes; but I felt as if she was looking at me. She did not answer—she was no doubt embarrassed, and no wonder; but at length her aunt came to her relief.

"It gives Miss ——," said she, "much pleasure to think that she has been of use to your father's son."

"Banished!" said the young lady, apparently not having heard her aunt; "you go willingly?"

"Willingly."

"I wish you all manner of happiness." This was said with a grave inclination; and, bowing as gravely to both ladies, I withdrew. When on the stairs, I heard a sudden movement in the room I had just left; and I paused, thinking for an instant—I know not what. All was silence; and I went forth.

One of the passengers in the ship in which I proceeded to the Spanish island was the young negress. I loathed the sight of this girl; and, for what reason I know not, the dislike appeared to be mutual. When I appeared upon deck, she immediately went below; and I have no doubt it was owing to the circumstance of her thus confining herself during the finest part of the day that she became unwell. I did not loathe her the less; but she was a favourite of my lost Antonia—I attended her from morning till night till she recovered.

I can give no account of the nine months I spent on the island: my spirits were bad. I was at length seized with a fever, and confined to bed. In my delirium I imagined that the negress was constantly by my side; and that she confessed to me that her real errand to —— had been to carry a letter from Antonia to me, which letter, influenced by a heavy bribe, she had delivered, together with my subsequent one, to the aunt. Whether this was an illusion of the fever or not, I cannot tell to this hour. I imagined other things with equal distinctness, which it is impossible I could have heard from her; for instance, that Antonia, on my leaving the room after bidding her farewell, had fallen senseless into the arms of her aunt. Be this as it may, I learnt, when I recovered, that the negress had actually visited my sick room more than once; and that she had then caught the fever, and was since dead!

I believe I must say that my mind did not altogether recover as speedily as my body. I recollect but indistinctly the frantic eagerness with which I prepared for my return to Scotland ; but at length all was accomplished, and when I found myself once more tumbling on the boundless deep, my spirits grew comparatively calm. In vain, however, I endeavoured, by every process of reasoning, to ascertain whether or not I was now the victim of a delusion still more cruel than that which I had indulged, when dreaming with Antonia among the glens and mountains of my native place. My imagination during the fever seemed to have gone over the whole of my history since boyhood, explaining what had hitherto appeared inexplicable, and connecting circumstances the most incongruous. The distant and the dead had appeared at my bedside, as well as the near and the living. Was there any part of this real, or was it all a vision of my disordered mind? I could not tell ; but since a doubt, engendered by Heaven or hell, had suggested itself, I determined to ascertain the truth from the lips of Antonia.

The voyage was prosperous ; and I found myself once more, with a fainting heart, in the avenue to — House. All there was animation and festivity. Mr. —, a nephew of the aunt (and a cousin of Antonia), as I learnt from the conversation of the passers by, had been lately married, and the whole country-side took a part in the rejoicings.

So much the better, thought I; in the midst of the bustle she will be able to spare me a moment unobserved, and a moment is all I require. The door was open, and servants and tradespeople crowding out and in. I could get no one to attend to me; for at that moment, with my haggard countenance and neglected dress, I could not have commanded much respect. I walked towards the room where I had been before—entered—and found Antonia there, and alone.

She was sitting on a sofa near the window engaged in reading. A rich pink domino was thrown loosely over her shoulders; her dark hair, parted plainly on the forehead, in that manner which is by far the most conducive to the effect of real beauty, was confined by a gold ornament encircling the head. Her face was paler than before, and a pensiveness, not amounting to melancholy, sat upon the features. She looked like one whose mind, caught by the spell of genius, enjoys a momentary respite from the world.

I stood for some moments breathless, almost fainting with emotion before her, till at length, heaving a deep sigh, she looked up. The book fell to the ground, and she clasped her hands suddenly upon her forehead, as if to steady her brain.

“Antonia!” said I. Although weak and broken, it was the voice of a living man; and she fell back in the sofa, while the blood rushed in a torrent to her face. “Antonia!” said I, “I demand but a

moment. I have been ill, very ill; and perhaps the things I have heard were only the illusions of insanity. But tell me this—answer me this, and I will be gone. Did you write to me by the negro girl? and did you receive a letter from me by the same channel?” She gasped for air; she attempted to speak, but her throat seemed swollen.

“What did your letter contain?” she at length said, in a voice so indistinct that I could hardly catch the words.

“Merciful God!” cried I, “then you did not receive it! It contained the sacrifice of my manly pride; it contained the vows of a passion in which my life and soul were bound up; it contained ——”

“Hold! enough!”

“Antonia! Speak!—you terrify me!”

“Hold back! touch me not for your life!”

“This is frenzy!” and I attempted to take her hand; but, with a wild, unearthly shriek, she sprang beyond my reach.

“Betrayed! Ruined! Lost!” These were the last articulate words I heard from her lips: she rushed from my presence, filling the air with the most terrific screams. An instant of vague, formless, indefinite horror ensued, when I was roused from my stupor by a man’s grasp upon my throat. He attempted to drag me to the door. My delirium returned; I caught hold of him with all the fury of despair; and after a brief but desperate struggle, bent him down to the earth. He was rescued—in

all probability from strangulation—by the servants and guests rushing into the room.

“Villain!” cried they, “*would you murder the husband, after destroying the wife?*”

This is the story of my Second Love. Is there enough? Would you have the how—the when—the why? Would you trace, through all its hideous details, the conspiracy of the aunt against me—the mean, vulgar, prosaic trickery of that pitiful yet terrible imbecile, a woman of the world? Would you count the screams of Antonia? Would you listen, by her bedside, to the ravings of her love and her despair? Would you calculate nicely how long life may linger in a young, sensitive, fragile, and most delicate being, after she has awakened to hopeless misery from the excitement and delirium of woman’s pride? What—I have given you tears, and you demand blood! Away!





Fig. 17. Engraving by H. V.

Engraving by H. V. Ryall



THE LADY GEORGINA RUSSELL.

BY THE EDITOR.

YES, she is fair as is the op'ning flow'r
That on her bosom blooms its fleeting hour ;
And the brown tress, whose glossy silken braid
Upon her round cheek throws its soft'ning shade,
Is like the moss that veils the maiden rose
Which, 'neath its shelter, rich in blushes glows.
What candour beams o'er all her placid face,
Where youth has strewn its evanescent grace !
What innocence sits throned upon her brow !
Long may it linger, beautiful as now,
Unclouded by a shade of envious care,
As moon-lit snow serenely bright and fair !
Oh ! daughter of an old and gen'rous line !
A noble ancestry indeed is thine !
And the pure blood that tints thy virgin cheek,
Were we its source through ages past to seek,
How many gallant hearts, the brave, the good,
Have glow'd with honour, fed by that red flood !

It warm'd the heart of her,—that peerless dame,*
Whose story has been writ by deathless fame ;
Not all that grandeur, all that power can give,
Like her bright name in history shall live !
Daughter of Russell ! may her virtues find
Their light reflected in thy lucid mind !
Mayst thou have all her worth, without her care,
And be—but no !—thou art *already* fair !

▪ Lady Rachael Russell.





IAN THE.

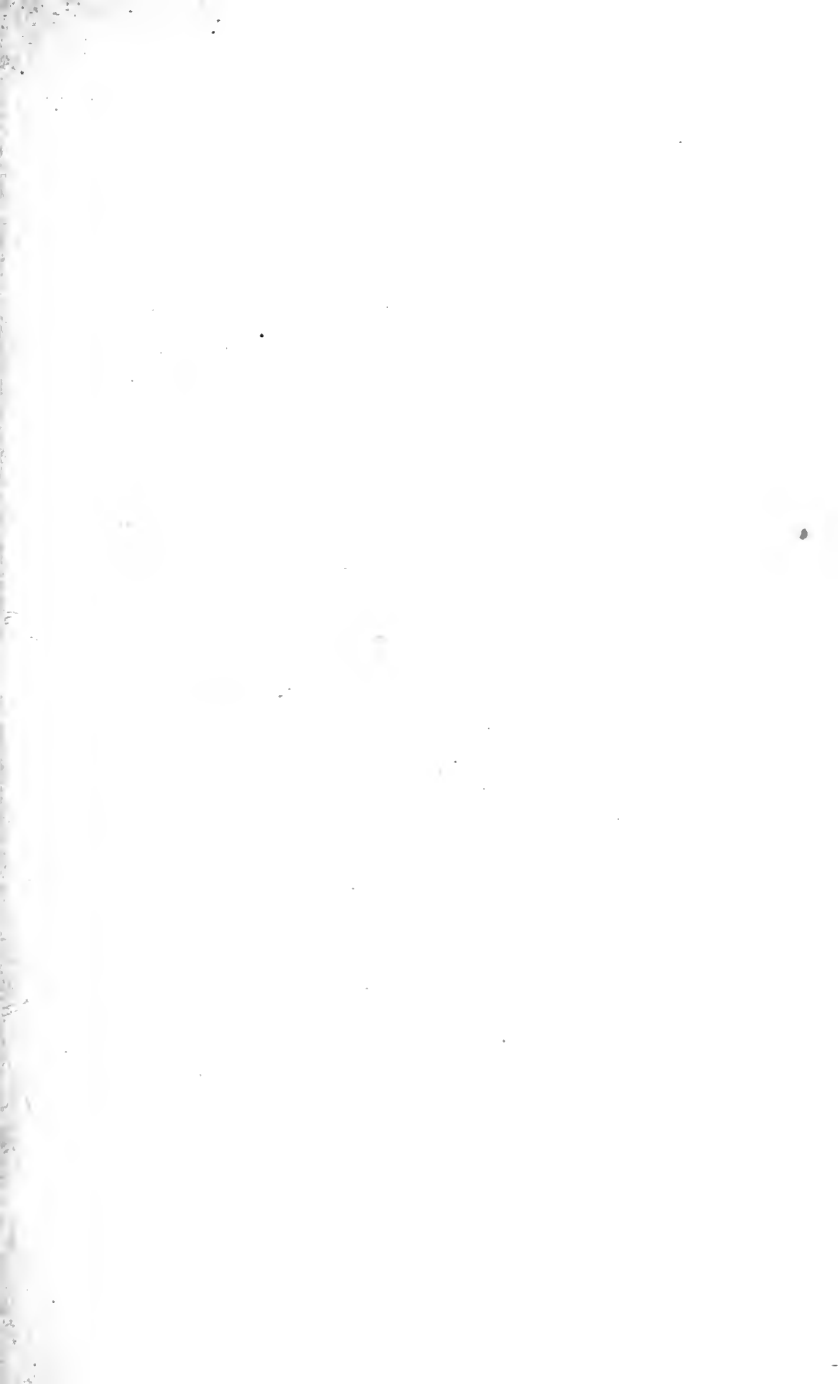
BY EDWARD FITZGERALD, ESQ.

DAY had gone down, and evening flung
Her shadow o'er the hill ;
Day had gone down, and yet she clung
Beside the lattice still :
She looked upon the river,
No bark its waters bear ;
She heard the aspens quiver,
No footstep glideth there :
“ There *was* a time it needed
No eye to strain its sight ;
Is all—is all unheeded ?—
Oh ! will he come to-night ? ”

“ The silent stars, he told me,
The sad and silent stars,
To-night should see him fold me,
Despite my lattice-bars :
The hurried clouds are shading
The lamps of yon kiosk ;
The wearied moon is fading
O'er minaret and mosque :

The steed—the steed has faltered,
That never failed before ;
The heart—the heart is altered—
Oh ! will he come no more ?”

The token-flowers she culled him
Have lost their hues of spring ;
The lute that oft had lulled him
Sleeps with a voiceless string !
Alas ! Love ever closes
His sweetest song with sighs ;
Love ever bathes *his* roses
With tears from maiden's eyes :
A morning song he sings us
Of blooming skies and bowers ;
The evening gifts he brings us—
Pale cheeks and withered flowers !





CONSTANCE RIPLEY;

OR,

WAS IT FRIENDSHIP, OR WAS IT LOVE ?

BY R. BERNAL, ESQ. M.P.

“ AND will not your ladyship allow me to assist you ? ”

“ No, Kelly ; there is not any necessity for your remaining ; you can leave me. I am sure I could not sleep ; and the morning is so fine, I may perhaps remain in my dressing-room for some time yet.”

The obedient *femme de chambre* quitted the apartment where her mistress, the Lady Ripley, reclined on her sofa in deep and sorrowful meditation.

It was a bright summer morning ; and Lady Ripley had returned from a fancy ball, at which all the principal families of the county had attended. The contrast between the artificial glare and splendour within doors, and the sober light of heaven without, had painfully affected her as she stepped into her carriage. Recollections of other and distant days crowded upon her mind—thoughts, in which the most poignant grief was blended with the tortures of self-accusation, abstracted all attention from out-

ward objects; and on the arrival of the carriage at the gates of Ripley Hall, its fair and weeping occupant was, in imagination, many miles removed from that spot. The reflections in which her wakeful mind was absorbed, were too exciting to admit of any wish for, or chance of repose. Lady Ripley, with prolonged and resolute efforts, at last roused herself from the languor which mental fatigue had induced, and she sought the refreshment and relief which the pure morning air might afford. Her apartment opened upon a spacious balcony, built in the Italian style, and commanding an extensive view over the park, and the surrounding country. Seating herself at one of the spacious arches of the same, and without having taken off the rich attire in which she was arrayed, as if entirely careless of herself and of present circumstances, she drew back the curtains of the balcony, and silently gazed on the prospect beneath her.

Fields, woods, and waters were tinged with the rosy and enlivening beams of an early sun. The fresh and pure breeze of heaven, as it wafted the healthful, yet simple perfumes from nature's stores, played gratefully through the dark hair, and cooled the heated and aching temples of the lady. Even the agitated current of her thoughts acknowledged the kindly influence, and derived comparative ease and tranquillity from the contemplation of the beautiful and peaceful scene displayed before her view.

A wild and varied park, bearing all the features

of the genuine old English character, encircled the mansion of Ripley Hall. The hand of art had added little to its own native and delightful advantages. Oaks and beeches, of great and uncertain age, were studded thickly over grounds sloping into gentle declivities, and covered with that soft, rich turf, which always recalls to the mind the images of old times and ancient sports. A clear and rapid stream, that had never been disturbed nor diverted by the busy spirit of modern skill and industry, ran cheerfully beneath the spreading foliage of the trees scattered irregularly along its course. Here the timid and graceful deer were once wont to resort as they left the still and close covert of the woods; but these antlered flocks were no longer to be seen bounding through the glades and copses of the wide domain. Traces, and continued traces, too, of the woodman's devastating axe, were easily to be discerned in the long line of plantations that covered the more distant parts of the park; and amongst the noble groups of trees serving as ornaments to the home grounds of the mansion, many were selected and marked as fit timber to be felled at a future opportunity. The structure of Ripley Hall was imposing in its appearance, and of a size and an importance in its architecture well suited to the extensive park and estate attached to it; but there was an air of neglect, nay, almost of desertion, about the building and the surrounding grounds, which told truly that their days of prosperity were past.

Constance Ripley sighed heavily, as she beheld these marks of neglect. She too well knew and regretted the cause; and with sentiments of shame and sorrow she turned from the balcony, to seek in her bed-room, retirement, if not repose. The train of thought in which her imagination had been wandering, was in itself sufficiently oppressive, and needed not the addition of other painful feelings engendered by different events and recollections.

The entertainment from which Lady Ripley had returned, had been splendid and attractive. It had been graced by an assemblage of the most distinguished rank and fashion, and by the presence of some very beautiful women. Yet, on that night, it was universally allowed, that Lady Ripley easily bore off the palm for her personal charms and elegance, although many of her competitors enjoyed the advantage of being considerably younger. And Lady Ripley had too much discernment, and too experienced a knowledge of the world, not to have been conscious of this flattering pre-eminence; and she was still too much attached to the notice and homage of the world, to feel indifferent to the acknowledgment or consciousness of her superiority. Why, then, had she on her departure from the festivities of the night, found any subject, within the circle of her mental reflections, that partook of so much pain, regret, and dissatisfaction? How was it that a lady of her rank and position in society, who had at that ball received the most flattering acknowledgments

of her beauty and influence, and in which she so generally delighted, could have quitted the sphere wherein she shone unrivalled, disturbed by melancholy and sorrowful feelings? The solution is plain and easy. She had on that night suddenly heard of the death in India of one whom she had not seen for many years; but the recollection of whom was as vivid, as the feeling which that recollection created was powerful. Had he been a friend—a lover? The latter character was improbable. Lady Ripley, it was generally known or believed, had married her husband, Sir Frederic, from her own free and unbiassed choice. She had always borne the reputation (whatever foibles might lie to her charge) of being an attached wife, and affectionate mother. Whatever the precise nature of her sentiments towards the party whose death had been announced to her, might have been, Lady Ripley, though a woman fond of gaiety and fashion, and by no means insensible to admiration, still possessed that glorious attribute of the female sex in all its perfection,—a tender and compassionate heart.

More than twelve years had passed away since Constance Evans first became the bride of the gay, handsome, and wealthy baronet, Sir Frederic Ripley. She was the daughter of a country gentleman of slender fortune; her beauty and accomplishments had, at an early period of her life, obtained for her a celebrity unusual, but not unmerited. Henry Arnold, the son of the clergyman of the parish, had been the

playmate of her infancy—the companion of her childhood—the anxious friend—the devoted lover of her advancing youth. The parents of both parties had viewed the progress of this attachment from its commencement with pleasure and satisfaction; and had looked forward to what might have been considered its natural result with complacency. Constance had, from her earliest recollections, been so accustomed to regard Henry as her destined partner in life, that if he had not possessed the merits and recommendations which really belonged to him—the most unqualified sense of honour—perfect integrity of purpose combined with unsullied disinterestedness—a noble heart, overflowing with affection to a degree almost romantic—she would by her general conduct have encouraged the attachment and hopes of Arnold. Moreover, he was neither deficient in the qualities of mind, nor in the advantages of person. But his prospects were very limited; his father's income being merely a life one, and derived from the moderate preferment which he held in the church.

Increase of years brought increase of reputation and admiration to Constance Evans. Unfortunately, it did not bring an increase of happiness to all parties. It is strange—it is lamentable—but it is too true; we have all witnessed it in our own experience—how many young women, who have been naturally kind, amiable—yes, even affectionate in disposition, intention, and conduct, have proved weak, irreso-

lute, and culpable, when the epoch of their perilous ordeal, their entrance into the world, has arrived; and when sincerity and generosity, and all the innocent and better sentiments of their bosoms, have been fatally merged in the love of admiration and in the detestable pride of conquest. Thus it had proved with Constance. Her family was of high respectability, though its possessions were scanty. Her grace, her beauty, were in themselves sufficient, without other auxiliaries, to attract a host of eager admirers of every grade and pretension. Constance was highly pleased; and it must be confessed that her parents, at the same time, were no less gratified. Arnold became restless, and at times mortified; still the intensity and purity of his devotion to his beloved Constance, would not permit him to suspect the sincerity and eventual determination of her heart, nor the truth of an attachment which had grown with her growth, (as he believed) and which formed part (as he fondly thought) of their mutual existence. The young, elegant, and rich Sir Frederic Ripley, was a daily visitor at the house of Mr. Evans,—an open and avowed admirer of his daughter; and all the world, including Arnold's own parents, felt convinced that a gentleman, straitened in his means as Mr. Evans was, would not look upon the baronet as an unworthy substitute for a poor vicar's son. Nevertheless, Arnold was blind and deaf to all he saw or heard; and was, without any plot or subterfuge, deceived.

The result proved what every body expected. Constance became the wife, the willing wife, of a baronet of old family, considerable county interest, and with a rent-roll of twelve thousand pounds a-year; and Constance left a plain and unpretending residence, where the enjoyments of life had been curtailed by disagreeable economy, for a splendid mansion, in which luxury and magnificence were alone consulted. If conscience whispered to the lady's heart, that she had trifled with the affections and the happiness of one who adored her, the pang was blunted by the conviction that she had escaped from a state of continual privations, and worldly mortifications, in which her father's narrow fortune unavoidably placed her; and the internal self-reproach was atoned for, by the belief—the specious argument—that she could still preserve in Henry Arnold a lasting and devoted friend. Poor Arnold! he could not, in the bitterness and severity of his disappointment, fly for refuge to such vague and imperfect consolation! As his blindness to passing events and future consequences had been excessive—as his love had been fervent and unbounded—so in proportion had the wound, inflicted in the innermost recesses of his heart, proved deep and agonizing. Still it was remarkable, that his lips never breathed the slightest accusation against the conduct of the lovely deceiver of his hopes; and even more remarkable, that his breast never conceived the least revengeful sentiment against the

destroyer of its repose and happiness. It is difficult to analyze the complicated mass of feelings and passions that sway the human heart, or to pursue their intricate windings to their real source ; but it is probable that the almost holy fervour, the intense affection, which still burned with undiminished warmth in the bosom of Arnold, had, by its own overpowering force, mastered every meaner passion, and had purified, while it inflamed, the hidden regions in which it had been kindled.

It was not in the nature of things that Arnold could remain at ease, or inactive, in the country where Lady Ripley resided. Circumstances, to which it is only necessary to allude, would have probably often brought them into society ; and a volcano, as it were, was in full action within the breast of Arnold, which, however subdued to outward appearance, would, if they had met frequently, have been the means of utterly destroying his vital energies, his health and tranquillity. He therefore at once wisely determined upon a total and immediate change of his former plans and destination. Through the kindness of an old friend of his father, he obtained a commission in a regiment of the line, stationed in the East Indies ; and his preparations for the voyage were speedily completed.

Before he left the home of his infancy, and the scene of his early felicity, with the secret intention of prolonging his absence to an indefinite period—perhaps for the remainder of his life—he had by

letter solicited a last and parting interview with Lady Ripley. The request was granted; and the meeting took place unknown to her husband or to any other person. To Arnold it proved the source of sensations contradictory and indefinable, of concealed agony and despair, of undisguised and melancholy gratification. As he pressed her cold and trembling hand in his own, he calmly, but with humid and downcast eyes, expressed to her his intention of leaving England for ever. He prayed fervently and piously for her happiness; and no reproach, or allusion to past events, escaped from him. Constance was stricken to the heart; and the tears gushed in torrents unheeded and unrepressed by her. Arnold, as he bade his last adieu, begged and entreated, as a parting favour and remembrance, that she would preserve an antique gold ring which he placed upon her finger, and which she had formerly admired in the days of his delusion and enjoyment. He sadly and emphatically exclaimed, "Constance! I ask—I solicit nothing that the world can condemn or censure. Do not entirely forget me! My only remaining consolation will arise from the conviction that you will believe and regard me as your friend, your faithful friend. While I live, I will pray to the God of all mercy to bless and protect you! When I die, may it be permitted to my spirit to watch over, and guard you from evil and danger!"

"Yes! Arnold," she answered in a voice rendered nearly inarticulate by sobs; "Dear Arnold!

do not say that you quit England for ever! You will return to us—you have ever been—you are—you must be—my true, my long-tried friend! Oh, may Heaven preserve you!”

Arnold turned his pallid countenance towards the destroyer of his happiness: in the tearful expression of his kindling eye, and in the tremulous working of the muscles of his face, there might have been observed the faint impression of a smile of pleasure or gratitude, but like the fugitive ray of a wintry sun, it was sickly and cheerless, and it quickly passed away. He did not dare to trust himself longer in the presence of one, who he still felt was the mistress, the undoubted mistress of the heart she had so cruelly blighted for ever. He tore himself, in a paroxysm of grief and despair, from the interview he had so eagerly desired, and in a few days afterwards embarked for the shores of India.

We do not presume to be nice casuists, or, in a narrative like this, to pronounce upon the conduct of Lady Ripley, whether she acted with propriety or not, in having consented to the meeting with her first lover, and in having concealed it from her husband. Suffice it to say, that it would have been difficult to explain the feelings which agitated her breast when she parted from him, whose sincerity she had betrayed, and who, to the last, had evinced an affection—a devotion—as valuable from its fervour as from its unaffected delicacy. If he had reproached her—if he had even reminded her of

her broken vows, of the plighted faith of childhood, and of the treachery of more mature age—she, from the spirit of anger which such reproaches, when accompanied with the consciousness of having merited them, naturally excites, would not have been half so much agitated. But no. Arnold had not uttered one single remonstrance, he had not ventured even to allude to what was hopeless, remediless. It was evident that his was the same, generous, confiding, and adoring heart, whose every pulse she had known and influenced in earlier days. No woman, unless an exception and a disgrace to her sex, could have been insensible to such devotion, generosity, and tenderness; and Constance Ripley was painfully grieved, and seriously and deeply affected. Long was that parting remembered by her; and though she subsequently moved the gayest amongst the gay, that parting was never wholly forgotten.

We have said that Sir Frederic Ripley was young and wealthy: he had married his lady from affection, and certainly she had preferred him to Henry Arnold. The false lustre of rank, riches, and fashion, might perhaps have somewhat blinded her; still, she had consented to the union from the impulse of ardent and requited affection, and the baronet, when he received her willing hand, became at the same time the possessor of her heart and of her faithful love. Sir Frederic had from his youth been the frequenter of a set addicted to play and dissipation. His habits had been formed in ex-

pense and carelessness, and had been matured in extravagance and imprudence. On attaining his majority, he became the master of a fine and productive estate, which in two or three years he had contrived to encumber greatly. When he proposed to Constance, she, in her love and mistaking confidence, treated the rumours of his irregularities lightly, as those which often attended the outset of every young man of rank and fortune. Her husband was always most kind, indulgent, and affectionate; every request, every wish was complied with and gratified; jewels, carriages, horses, and presents of every description, were presented to her in profusion. Sir Frederic was proud of the beauty of his wife. He gloried in the admiration it commanded, though, at the same time, however anomalous, he every now and then yielded to a feeling of jealousy, as he perceived that Constance triumphed in the reign which she had established in the circles of fashion and notoriety. Constance might be weak and thoughtless, but she loved, and dearly loved her husband; and two children, the issue of their marriage, to whom she proved a fond and doting parent, confirmed her in the paths of love and duty.

Bickerings and differences frequently occurred between the baronet and his lady, when, in some moment of jealous suspicion, he openly expressed his displeasure at her giddy conduct; while, on the other hand, she could then readily retort or defend herself, by reminding him that he had always pressed

her to accept of every invitation, and, in turn, to render the parties at Ripley Hall as agreeable and attractive as possible. It was very unfortunate that Constance had not that strength of principle, or resolution of mind, which would of itself have served to check the increasing extravagance of her husband's habits. From example she had acquired a taste for every thing that, under the name or disguise of fashion and elegance, led to the most inconsiderate prodigality, and to consequent inconvenience and trouble. Her milliner's and jeweller's bills were enormous; accounts soon became in arrear, neglected, and unpaid. Sir Frederic had since his marriage, in addition to his former imprudent habits, acquired a more decided inclination to play. He had lost very considerable sums from time to time; Newmarket and Doncaster were with him never-failing and dangerous attractions; and as the little differences between him and his lady became more frequent, his absence from home was more continually prolonged, and his embarrassments increased to a fearful extent. Debts of honour were so pressing, tradesmen and other creditors so clamorous, that at the period when this narrative commences, not only had Sir Frederic entangled himself by every species of engagement, but he had been reduced to cut down a large quantity of the fine old timber on his estate, to sell off the deer in his park, and to suffer the domain to fall into a state of miserable decay. Still both parties pur-

sued their same heedless course—Sir Frederic, now a certain guest at the hazard-table; and his wife, the most courted and admired beauty of every ball or entertainment, over which rank and fashion presided. By temporary and distressing expedients and shifts, an establishment was contrived to be kept up, and appearances were maintained, in the interior of Ripley Hall; although its inhabitants lived in the daily fear of writs, and executions on their equipages and furniture, which were only averted by ruinous compromises and additional encumbrances. Hence it was that Lady Ripley, as she surveyed the thinned woods and neglected park from her balcony, felt shame, mortification, and sorrow. The feelings of grief, the recollections, in which pain and bitterness had mingled with departed pleasure, on her return from the fancy ball, had been created (as we have already hinted) by the information she had then unexpectedly received. It was told to her that a ship had lately arrived from Calcutta, which brought the intelligence of Arnold having, with several other officers of his regiment, fallen victims to a malignant disease which had been ravaging the presidency. Twelve years had elapsed since Arnold sailed from England; some correspondence had been carried on between him and Lady Ripley, which was, in the first instance, totally unsuspected by Sir Frederic, but which, when accidentally discovered by him, had proved the cause of ungenerous remarks, and subsequently of harsh reproofs on his part.

The ring, the parting gift which Constance had received from Arnold, and which she persisted in always wearing, formed a subject on which her husband often vented his jealous and angered spirit. In the course of those twelve years Arnold had attained the rank of lieutenant-colonel, and the possession of some little competence; and we should remark, that Lady Ripley, who from her position and claims in society had acquired influence and interest, had exercised her power worthily, though secretly, in assisting materially the advancement of her former lover. Arnold had by chance discovered this, though it was studiously concealed by Lady Ripley; and we need not say, that the knowledge of this fact tended to augment the tenderness and eloquence of a letter of gratitude, which he had written in language of the most pure, yet devoted, friendship to her.

Lady Ripley rose from her bed at a late hour in the following day, with an aching head, and a still more aching heart. Sir Frederic had been for a week or more absent from home, and his wife, from certain previous intimations, had every reason to apprehend that business of an unpleasant nature, connected with his embarrassed situation, detained him in London. While Lady Ripley still wept over the death of Arnold, her conscience warned her that her conduct towards him had been one of unexampled cruelty and perfidy. And as her eyes looked upon, and her thoughts recurred to, the

various proofs and instances collected around her of her own imprudences, of her husband's embarrassments, and of their mutual faults and follies, she upbraided herself bitterly as the cause of the ruin of a husband she really loved, and of the death of one whom she had regarded as the best, the truest, and the dearest of friends. When she listened to the artless language of her children, who, fondly embracing her, inquired the reasons of her grief and of her tears, those tears fell faster, that grief was redoubled, and its poignancy became intolerable. A letter from Sir Frederic had arrived by the post; it was written in a hurried and obscure manner, and alluded to the urgent demand of a considerable debt, which, he added, "would drive him mad if not provided for."

Constance replied to the letter, immediately offering, in the most sincere and passionate manner, to make every sacrifice in her power that affection and tenderness could dictate; and she, at the same time, communicated the intelligence of the death of Colonel Arnold in India. When she was preparing to close the letter with a seal she wore on her finger, she, for the first time, perceived that the gold ring, the parting gift of the unfortunate Arnold, was missing. In much alarm, she commenced a careful search in every part of her dressing and bed-rooms, and, indeed, in every quarter of the mansion; but in vain. It was a matter of astonishment to her; for she well remembered having

had the ring upon her left hand on the preceding night. A messenger was despatched to the house at which she had been; but he returned without any tidings of the lost ornament. Constance was not superstitious; but when she called to mind the parting and solemn words of Arnold, and mentally combined the disappearance of the ring with the period of the announcement of his death, a sudden chill benumbed her blood, while visions indefinite in their character, and awful in their nature, floated before her troubled imagination. Weary and wretched were the days that followed: and abandoning herself to solitude, she never quitted the precincts of the domain.

A week had lingered on, when Constance received another letter from her husband, the contents of which were so appalling and unexpected, that as she perused it she could hardly believe in the truth of what it disclosed. Sir Frederic, in language and with expressions denoting the most violent agitation and despair, had written to inform her, that harassed with the threats of personal arrest, in consequence of the debt before alluded to, and amounting to 8000*l.*, he had in a transport of madness forged the acceptance and signature of an acquaintance to that amount, to avert the consequences then impending, trusting that before the acceptance would come due, he should be enabled to raise the money by other means, and get back the acceptance; but that his credit had been so

entirely lost, and the impossibility of obtaining money in any way so apparent, that it was now evident the forgery must be discovered in a short time, and the only chance of security remaining for him was an immediate flight from the country. The letter added, that he would be at Ripley in the night of the same day on which it would be received, to take leave of his wife, and to make some hasty arrangements prior to his departure.

The horror and alarm of Constance at this dreadful disclosure were so excessive, that the sources of sorrow were dried up, and she no longer sighed or wept. As she pictured to herself the fate to which her husband was exposed, as she turned her anxious eyes towards her innocent offspring, and remembered that ruin, poverty, and, worse than all, disgrace and degradation in the most appalling shape, were near at hand, Constance felt as if the tide of life was ebbing fast from her. In vain she caught at every distant hope of relief—at every delusive idea of security—no comfort, no consolation, no prospect of an escape from misery could be discovered; and Constance sank into gloom and despondency.

In the course of the day, a note addressed to Lady Ripley was brought by a country lad, who did not ask for any answer, and went away directly. Constance was so susceptible of the slightest excitement, and so alive to real or fancied dangers, that she shook like an aspen leaf, as she broke the seal

of the note. It did not bear any signature, and the character of the hand-writing was not recognised by her. The note ran thus :—

“ A ring which belongs to Lady Ripley, and which no doubt has been lost by her, has been found, and will readily be restored to her, if she will be at the Warren House, this night, at nine o'clock.”

It was some relief, however trifling, to Constance, to have her thoughts diverted, if even momentarily, into any other channel. The note surprised and perplexed her; there was an air, or affectation of mystery about it, for which she could not in any way account; and dread fancies, and wandering delusions, were again conjured up in her mind. From whom could the note have come? Inquiries of the servants, as to the person who had brought it, threw no light whatever on the subject. She would have sent to the Warren House, to endeavour to obtain some elucidation of this singular circumstance, but she was loth to make any of her servants acquainted with the purport of the communication she had received. She decided upon visiting the place herself at the time appointed; there could not be any risk, nor danger of harm or evil—Sir Frederic had written that he should not reach Ripley before a late hour, and there would be sufficient time for her return to the Hall.

At the farthest extremity of the park, and in the shelter of a woody dell, there stood a long low build-

ing, built in that style of architecture which prevailed in the latter time of Henry VIII. It was in parts in good preservation, and there was something in its general appearance very picturesque though solitary. It had, no doubt, in former days served as a hunting-lodge; and it had for many years, gone by the name of the Warren House. The building was the property of Sir Frederic Ripley, and stood within the limits of his park. The present tenants of the lodge were an old man and his wife, formerly servants for a long period in the family of the father of Lady Ripley; and they had been placed there at her request, as the means of affording them a comfortable retirement. Constance was often in the habit of resorting to the Warren House; and one of the rooms was set apart for her, and writing materials, books, and other matters, were kept therein for her use. This apartment remained nearly in the same state, as to its internal arrangement and furniture, as when the lodge had been first erected. It extended the whole length of the building, and was lighted by several narrow casement windows. The sides were panelled with oak of the darkest colour; a lofty and wide fire-place occupied the centre of the room. High-backed chairs, with seats of faded tapestry, some heavily framed and carved wainscot tables, with a large Venetian mirror, formed the whole of the original furniture; while no modern innovation, save a small cabinet of books, was to be seen in the spacious chamber.

In the daytime, when the rays of a powerful sun, streaming through the diamond-paned casements, diffused light and cheerfulness over the polished inlaid flooring, and over the deep-brown panels of the walls, there was something not unpleasing in the general tone and appearance of the room; but at night, especially when the trifling light which a lamp or candles afforded, only tended to throw parts of the extensive area into more palpable obscurity—the whole wore an air of gloominess and desertion singularly oppressive and chilling. Indeed, amongst the surrounding peasantry, tales were current of unaccountable sights and sounds connected with this old building.

The night was dark, but the sky was calm, and the air inviting, as Constance thoughtfully pursued her way through the park to the Warren House. Strange fancies—mysterious presentiments, took possession of her mind, as she walked through the thick and embowered glade. Anxiety, amounting to torture, for the perilous situation of her husband—the anticipation of his speedy arrival, in itself a subject of mixed apprehension and pleasure, by turns harassed and excited her feelings. When she reached the porch of the lodge, she was in such a state of agitation, that some minutes passed before she could venture to raise the latch. Luckily, by that time she had so far mastered her emotions, that they were concealed from, or little observed by the old couple who inhabited the house; and Constance,

asking for a light, went up to the room we have already described. No question was proffered, no observations made; and she, without considering how the communication was to be effected, which had induced her to visit the Warren House at that unusual hour, took her seat at a table, determined to await the result. Constance attempted to repress her anxiety, and to still her vigilant thoughts by reading; but her attention could not be commanded, and as she looked through the desolate and spacious apartment, her feelings responded to the gloom that prevailed in every part of it. A sense of awe—of coming evil, oppressed her—she reclined her head upon her arm, and closing her eyes, strove, as it were, to stifle, for a time, her visual and mental faculties. A slight noise or rustling, in the farther part of the chamber, disturbed her. Alarmed, agitated, and confused, she started up from her chair, and cast a hurried and timid glance around her; but she could not discern any thing, nor could her sight penetrate into the darkness that shrouded either end of the long apartment. Again she tried to turn the pages of the volume she had cast aside; when, raising her eyes upon the wide, antique mirror that faced her, she beheld, or fancied she beheld, reflected in its dull and hazy surface, the shadow of a human figure. Constance was unable to utter a word—her whole frame was pervaded by a cold and clammy tremour. She would have given worlds to have escaped from the chamber, but she was

powerless. A spell seemed to have come over her—and she remained fixed immovably to her chair. She did not dare to turn her head—to look behind her—still, under an indescribable and insurmountable impulse, which she could not resist, she raised her eyes slowly and cautiously upon the mirror, prepared to encounter some still more horrible vision! Was it a delusion of her agitated and heated mind? or were the secrets of the grave permitted, for some solemn and inscrutable purpose, to be disclosed to her? for in that mirror, Constance clearly saw and traced the image of Henry Arnold—she could not mistake—she could not forget those well-known features—the lineaments were too deeply impressed upon her memory. The face looked deadly pale and care-worn—the glassy eyes were fixed with an expression of sorrow and kindness upon her. Were her senses leaving her? Her reason was disturbed—her respiration became thick and short—she tried to make herself heard by the servants below, but no sound issued from her lips. She was perfectly conscious of some movement near to her, and in the next moment her name was distinctly pronounced, and repeated in a low but audible tone. This was too much for the power of endurance. Subdued by terror and previous anxiety, Constance could no longer see or hear, but uttering a shrill and wild scream, she fainted and fell heavily on the floor!

Her cry and the sound of her fall were heard by the

old couple below, who quickly came to her assistance. They raised her from the floor, and by the means of proper restoratives, succeeded in recalling her to consciousness, and to comparative tranquillity, sooner than could have been anticipated, under the excitement she had sustained. When she came to herself, she had nearly relapsed again, upon beholding a third person in the group, now eagerly employed about her. But it was no dream—no vision of the imagination—no supernatural revelation. There stood Henry Arnold, leaning over her trembling form with impatient solicitude—his hand, cold as an icicle, had touched her own, and in imploring and sorrowful accents, he said:

“Lady Ripley—for Heaven’s sake! forgive me for the alarm I unintentionally caused you.”

When Constance was convinced that she really heard the voice of the living Arnold, however altered—and fearfully altered he was—by years, climate, and sickness, she gradually became composed and enabled to listen to the explanation of his extraordinary appearance.

The account was brief and simple. It was true that a malignant and epidemic disease had reached that part of the province of Bengal where Arnold’s regiment was stationed, and that a considerable proportion of its officers and men had fallen under the fatal influence of the wide-spreading malady. Arnold had been attacked by it, and had escaped almost by a miracle from the jaws of death. But the state of

weakness in which he was left, and his entire incapacity to discharge his military duties, compelled him to apply for leave of absence ; and he embarked for England in the vessel which conveyed the false report of his death. This rumour had originated in the tendency, so common to all persons, to exaggerate the amount of misfortune or calamity where it really exists. Arnold, after visiting his family, could not restrain or resist a restlessness—an eagerness, which, feeble as he was, drove him to the neighbourhood of Ripley Hall. He had, since his return to England, inquired into, and informed himself minutely upon, every matter connected with Lady Ripley and her family. He had, with sincere grief and sympathy, heard of the distressing state to which the baronet and Constance had been reduced by folly and extravagance ; of the mortgages, bonds, and other encumbrances which were in every body's knowledge, and of the consequent ruin that was threatening the family and property of Ripley. He had determined upon going himself to the Hall, and upon offering his counsel and assistance, and the humble and limited efforts that his friendship could supply ; but when he drew near to the spot where his beloved Constance resided, his courage failed him. Reason—good sense—propriety, suggested to him, that this was a line of conduct he ought not in prudence to follow. He was in a state of doubt and inquietude—he would write and express his intentions so openly and kindly,

that even Sir Frederic must be convinced of the candour and good faith of his feelings. But Arnold proved irresolute when so near to Constance; and he lingered in a village close to Ripley Hall for two or three days without taking any step whatever. He had often, in the course of that period, traversed the park and domain of Ripley, at all hours, without being observed; for, since the change in the fortunes of its proprietor, the keepers and out-door servants had been mostly discharged. Arnold had actually stood under the balcony, on the very morning when Lady Ripley had, on her return from the fancy ball, seated herself upon it. He had, silently and secretly, gazed with pain and delight upon her; and when she, in drawing the curtain of the window, unknowingly dropped the ring, the parting pledge from her finger, Arnold had seen it fall, and had recovered it before he retreated from the lawn beneath the balcony. In former days, he had well known and had been a great favourite of the old couple at the Warren House, when they lived in the service of Constance's father. He now asked for and received temporary accommodation at the lodge; and it was thence he wrote, and sent the note to Ripley Hall.

"Yes, Constance! dear Constance!" Arnold repeated; "if I may be allowed so to call you, receive back this simple ring—the pledge of true and unalterable friendship."

The old servants had left the apartment. Lady

Ripley's feelings found relief in tears; she wept bitterly as she listened to the voice of other and youthful days; and as her brimming eyes rested upon Arnold's face and figure, now sadly wasted by illness, years, and an Indian sun, the wreck caused by blighted affection and by faded hopes, was to *her* also too visible; but neither time, disease, nor absence, had aught changed or diminished the faith and truth, or the generous purity, of his noble heart.

"Oh, Arnold!" exclaimed Constance, wildly, and in a tone of deep affliction, "these are not times for ceremony, disguise, or hypocrisy. Call me Constance! call me any thing! I am wretched—miserable beyond belief!"

"Calm yourself—moderate this unnecessary agitation! Dearest Constance!" continued Arnold, though nearly as agitated as the sorrowing woman he was addressing, "you take too desponding a view of affairs: I am not a stranger to Sir Frederic's embarrassments—to his and your misfortunes, I mean; much may still be effected by prudence and good management—my humble but zealous services can be useful—they will be sincere and active."

"No, Arnold! You do not—you cannot—you must not, know the extent of our misery!" the lady replied. "Merciful God! that I should have lived to suffer this disgrace! Kind and generous friend! you must not, from my lips, learn the full extent of our heart-breaking calamities!"

“ Constance ! I implore you, confide in me. What can you mean ? what terrible secret remains untold ? ”

“ Ask not — seek not further, Arnold ! ” Lady Ripley answered — her accents faint from sobs and weeping. “ Ruin, degradation, and misery, will be the inevitable fate of my husband and myself, and the bitter portion of my dear children. ”

Lady Ripley strongly and earnestly at first refused to impart to her friend the causes of the calamity she had so feelingly alluded to ; but Arnold entreated her with so much respectful perseverance, that he finally succeeded in extracting from her reluctant lips the account of all that had befallen the unfortunate family — of Sir Frederic’s criminal act — of the dreadful peril hanging over him. Arnold, though thunderstruck at a communication which he had so little expected, and though fully aware of the difficulties and dangers by which his adored Constance was surrounded, had, on the instant, mentally decided on the course he would pursue, when he might be better enabled to act, by the help of more complete information, which it was not in Lady Ripley’s power as yet to supply.

Time flew on ; and it was so late before Lady Ripley felt herself able to leave the lodge, that a new cause of alarm and perplexity arose from the apprehension that her husband would arrive at the Hall before she could return there. She would not permit Arnold to accompany her across the park ;

but, hurrying on her cloak, she told him to call, on the following morning, at the Hall. Fear and anxiety gave her almost unnatural strength and speed as she ran over lawn and glade, and through the woody paths, to the mansion. The baronet had arrived, and was impatient to meet her; he was too much excited and occupied by his own calamitous situation to ask for an explanation of her absence. Little time remained for the necessary arrangements he had to make previous to his quitting the country. Lady Ripley learned from him, that the forged acceptance would not be due until the day after the next; and that at present it was in the hands of a well-known money-lender, whose name and residence he mentioned: that, until the acceptance was presented for payment, the forgery might remain undiscovered; and, by extraordinary despatch, in the interval, he, Sir Frederic, might be enabled to quit England in safety.

When the next morning dawned, the parting—the miserable parting—between the guilty husband and his fond, though weak wife, and his innocent children, had already taken place; and Sir Frederic was on his way to the sea-port from which he proposed to embark for the continent.

Arnold, when he arrived at Ripley Hall early on that morning, found Constance very ill, and in a state of misery and suffering that made his heart bleed. She now, without hesitation, voluntarily confided to him every particular of the information

she had received from her husband. Arnold listened attentively; his mind was made up; a smile of satisfaction lighted up his wan and sickly countenance as he said, with more animation than he had yet displayed, "Farewell, Constance! for a short time, take courage—hope for the best. I do not despair yet of being able to bring you good news."

Arnold had, in the course of his residence in India, been enabled, through a staff appointment he held, to accumulate a little fortune, amounting to 12,000*l*. He had been lucky enough to succeed in securing remittances of the same, in good and unexceptionable bills, upon established houses in London. His father had died, leaving a widow and daughter in very humble circumstances; and Arnold's first and fondest wish, and long-conceived intention was, to place his mother and sister in a state of comparative comfort and independence. This matter he, on his leaving India, knew he could accomplish; and the thought of being able to contribute to the happiness of his dear relatives, whether he survived the effects of his serious illness or not, was a source of soothing consolation to his mind during the voyage home.

But how strange is the destiny of man! how anomalous the contradictory feelings of even a good and virtuous heart! Arnold's intentions were on a sudden completely reversed, and friendship or love diverted all his former determined and excellent resolutions. Ill as he really was, he journeyed rapidly,

without the least delay, to London; he called without ceremony upon the money-lender who had possession of the forged acceptance given by Sir Frederic. It was due, and to be presented within a few hours after his interview with the party. Under the pretence of being nearly related to the baronet, he arranged to pay the money before the expiration of the time, and to take up the acceptance. The business was now easily transacted. His bankers advanced him, on his India remittances, the sum of 8000*l.* required, and, before the evening of the same day, the money was paid, and the important document delivered up, and in his possession, on which the character, the life of the baronet, and the misery or salvation of Lady Ripley and her children, depended. Although much exhausted by his exertions, and little able to endure fatigue, Arnold did not rest till he found himself in the mail-coach that travelled in the nearest direction to Ripley Hall. On the next day, Arnold was in the presence of Constance, who was surprised to behold her friend so soon returned; his face unnaturally flushed, and his whole deportment strikingly excited. "Dearest Constance! thank God! I have succeeded; your husband will be safe, his character preserved, and your children and yourself may hereafter still enjoy peace and happiness. Here is the fatal acceptance," Arnold continued, holding out the important paper; "it has been fully satisfied—no evidence of your husband's misfortune can hereafter

be in existence," he added, as he carefully destroyed the paper.

Lady Ripley's transports and gratitude were unbounded—she wanted power and language to express them; but how would her feelings have been evinced, could she have known the extent of the sacrifice Arnold had made? and which he in no manner hinted to her; for he cautiously and dexterously avoided, though repeatedly urged by her, to explain how he had acted and succeeded. She detailed to Arnold all the plans and arrangements which she had concerted with her husband. She was to join him on the other side of the water, as soon as he was settled in security; and though circumstances were now so materially altered, it was certain, that before Sir Frederic could be apprised of what had occurred, he would have sailed from England.

In a few days, intelligence was received of the baronet's arrival in Holland. Lady Ripley, with her children, were already prepared to abandon their once splendid but now cheerless residence; and measures had been taken for the breaking-up of their domestic establishment. Arnold assisted in every arrangement of importance with a steadiness of friendship, the value of which was never before so clearly demonstrated to Lady Ripley as now, when, under the emergency, she so greatly stood in want of it. He escorted her and the children to their port of embarkation; and endeavoured, as far as it

was in his power, to soothe every little inconvenience, and to anticipate every desire. Constance, when she bade him adieu, felt as if she were losing for ever a guardian genius, a being of a superior nature, on whom her only solid hopes of peace, and protection from danger, could rest ; while Arnold, on his part, as he bade her a long and lingering farewell, felt as if the dearest tie that connected him with life was rudely snapped asunder.

When Arnold stood silently on the sea-beach, watching the receding vessel which bore far away the woman he had loved so affectionately ; her with whom his feelings were still interwoven by a spell, into the nature of which he would not penetrate—he believed himself to be a melancholy and deserted wretch, one for whom existence had lost its only powerful attractions. But the virtuous principles of his mind recalled him to a sense of the duties, the sacred duties, he had to discharge. A mother, a sister, endeared to him by disinterested affection, had claims, and urgent claims, upon his love and protection. He exerted his mental courage, and shook off, for a time, the inertness and depression that illness and sorrowful regret had occasioned. An inward monitor whispered, that by his act of generosity towards Sir Frederic Ripley — towards his lady rather—he had been guilty of cruel injustice to his own dear relatives ; that such act had not been the fruit of pure and unmixed generosity nor rectitude ; that motives or sentiments

connected with a passion which it was hopeless, or criminal perhaps, to nourish, had been the inducements; and that its result would inevitably tend to the injury of those relatives, by the deprivation of many comforts, nay necessities, which were required, and which the money would have obtained.

Arnold was miserable under the review which his conscience took of his past conduct; and his doubts, his self-accusations were only appeased by his speedy decision on his plans for the future. He was sensible that his constitution had received a violent blow from the illness by which he had been attacked in India, and he knew that he never should be able to resume his military career with the energy and activity he regarded as indispensable. The physicians had recommended the south of France to him; and that country would be in every respect a desirable residence for a family with a very small income. He disposed of his commission, and adding the produce of the sale to the surplus which remained of his little fortune, he found that, by a judicious investment of the capital, an income would be derived, which, joined to the trifling annuity his mother enjoyed, would secure a provision for himself, his mother, and sister, enough to maintain them in decent retirement. To the south of France they accordingly removed; and Arnold, if he had proved unfortunate in his dreams of early youth—in his golden visions of love and felicity—at least

found that the tender care and solicitude of a mother and sister, and the consciousness on his part of contributing to their happiness, were to him, a confirmed invalid, the source of peace and contentment.

Two years had rapidly gone by, and Sir Frederic Ripley and his lady, taught a wholesome though harsh lesson by adversity, had, by judicious and strict economy, and by the sales of considerable portions of his estates, removed in some degree the load of embarrassment which pressed upon them. They were enabled to extend their rambles over other parts of the continent.

Sir Frederic Ripley, although he was of course fully aware of the heavy obligation under which he was bound to Arnold, and for which he felt (to do him justice) the most sincere and lively gratitude, still remained, in common with his wife, ignorant of the manner in which their benefactor and friend had performed for them so important a service, and of the extent of his friendship and generosity. A correspondence was always kept up between them and Arnold; and, in the course thereof, they continually and anxiously entreated of him to favour them farther by the communication of the means he had employed to avert the peril and destruction which had threatened the Ripley family. In vain was this request repeated over and over again: in vain was it accompanied by professions of deep and eternal gratitude, and by the most delicate allu-

sions to an anxiety to discharge any pecuniary engagement or debt, which must have been incurred in the progress of that important arrangement. Neither Constance nor her husband entertained any suspicion that Arnold could have had so large a sum as 8000*l.* in his own power or disposition; but, on this point, Arnold's letters were always perfectly silent; and to such questions he never returned any reply or notice.

The drooping health and strength of Arnold had been made known to them by his letters, and they were anxious, most anxious, to see their friend. On arriving at Marseilles, they sought for the habitation of the Colonel, and were directed to a *bastide* situated in the environs of that city. Thither they drove in eager and fond expectation. A neat white fronted villa, standing on a bold eminence, and facing the blue and sparkling Mediterranean, was pointed out to them as the habitation of which they were in search. To their inquiry, addressed to some peasants whom they met on their road, the answer was, "The ladies have left for England"—"but the Colonel?" Sir Frederic asked. The peasants pointed to a little grove on the right of the villa. Sir Frederic and Constance hurried or rather ran up the hill towards the spot to which they had been referred. Some full-grown orange-trees, rich in their pendulous and perfumed blossoms, cast their shade and fragrance over a marble pe-

destal. On the tablet of this simple monument, this inscription was engraved :

SACRED TO THE MEMORY
OF
HENRY ARNOLD,
FORMERLY A LIEUT.-COLONEL IN HIS BRITANNIC
MAJESTY'S SERVICE,
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE ON THE 9TH OF MARCH 1826,
AGED THIRTY-SIX YEARS.
HE WAS A PIOUS SON,
AN AFFECTIONATE BROTHER,
AND
A TRUE AND FAITHFUL FRIEND.

When Constance read the painful information which this inscription conveyed, she faltered and fell back fainting in the arms of her husband. Sir Frederic, hardly less distressed and affected than his wife, carried her, with the assistance of the peasants who had accompanied them, to the carriage. They returned to their hotel at Marseilles. It was some hours before Constance was sufficiently recovered to move from the town ; but when she was able to bear the exertion, Sir Frederic and Lady Ripley, in silence and affliction, quitted Marseilles, eagerly avoiding any further residence in a place where their feelings had experienced so rude and so severe a shock—a shock, the recollection of which was never effaced by the lapse of time, or the course of future prosperity.





MARY, OR THE SERPENTINE SKAITERS.

BY JAMES SMITH, ESQ.

DEAR Mary, you've gazed on the Serpentine skaiters,
As agile as swallows, as fleet on the wing ;
Far-darting Apollos, in cloth boots and gaiters,
Whose tilts and whose tournaments make the ice
ring.

Of all the blithe gala, come, paint me a picture—
From Vulcan's red glances your countenance
screen ;

And, ere you deposit your furry constrictor,
Report what you've heard, and depict what you've
seen.

Say, who were the leaders, the gaze of the million,
Who spanned the wide channel on iron-bound
heel?

What light unapproachables swam a cotilion,
(In this Anno Domini, dubbed a quadrille)?
What Jersey, looked after by Mothers and Daughters,
What Bligh, what Argyle, the *élite* of the set,
Like Pope's young Camilla, fled over the waters?
What Caulfield spun round in a brisk pirouette?

You smile, gentle Mary ; yet those were the leaders,
In days long departed, as Mercury fleet ;

But Time, with his scythe, has pronounced them
seceders,
And clipped the light pinions that feathered their
feet.

I, "once an Arcadian," like them too could measure
The stream, and alert o'er the Serpentine dart;
But, warned by the gout, I abjure the chill pleasure,
And gaze on the game where I once bore a part.

A little red-robin, high perched on the willow
That droops o'er the margin your foot lately
press'd,

Has sung in my ear that the ice-fettered billow
Bore one whom you gazed on far more than the
rest:

'Twas handsome John Selby—that screen, blushing
Mary,

Is shifting its place while my theme I pursue;
Your hand seems resolved its position to vary,
And raise it a rampart between me and you.

Nay! pardon the hint: 'twas not meant to affright
you—

Those dark downward orbs prithee raise up again;
Should Love not play truant, and Hymen unite you,
May peace and prosperity rivet the chain!
Those spirits of youth may misfortune ne'er sober—
May blooming felicity call you her own;
Till Time shall have mellow'd your May to October,
And Mary and John shall be Darby and Joan.

THE BEGGAR'S PETITION.*

BY THE LADY ISABELLA ST. JOHN.

“ Oh ! give relief, and Heaven will bless your store ! ”

YE rich and ye wise, ye that dote on mince-pies,
I pray ye, this question digest :
In what way can such fare as the pure open air
Be most nicely and temptingly drest ?
In the cookery books I have cast anxious looks,
But, alas ! they've been ever in vain ;
E'en mendicity broth, though call'd flumm'ry and
froth,
Is neither of air nor of rain.
Tell me, then, if you can, how this diet of man
Should be cooked—whether boiled or roast ?
Foul or fair, is it best?—from the north or the
west?—
When it rushes from inland, or coast ?
As digestible food, in vapour is't good ?
Is it better when dry, or when moist ?—
When heavy, or light?—in the day, or the night?—
In thunder, in lightning, or frost ?

* The above lines were written on reading in Blackwood's Magazine an article entitled “ Panaceas for Poverty.”

